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VOL. III.—No. 145.] TRANSMISSION AT BOOK RATES. WEEK ENDING APRIL 29, 1893. ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

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The Laboratory, 11, Billiter Square, E.C., Feb. 27th, 1893.

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Ladies'	2s. 3d.	Ladies' per doz.	2s. 9d.
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Enclose length walking shoe. Prices (post free); Quality (colour Brown). Chldn's. Ladies. Gents.

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E. Velvet Uppers (Black)		2s. 6d.	2s. 9d.
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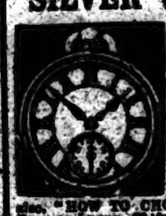

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SPECIALITÉ: BONES, BUSKS, AND STEELS PROTECTED BY LEATHER.

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The Coach Spring Busks, Registered, used in these Corsets are Warranted Unbreakable. 5s. 11d. per pair; also Better Qualities 7s. 11d. and 10s. 6d.
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Machines for Touring. Pneumatic Cushion, Solid Tyres.

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"PIONEER" BRAND
SWEET GOLDEN FLAKE CAVENDISH.
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S. PEACH & SONS'
LACE CURTAINS.
21/- 1893 Popular Parcel. 21/-
Carriage Paid. Direct from the Looms.
Lot No. 577, containing 1 pair Choice DRAWING ROOM Curtains, superb design of Point Duchesse, magnificent goods, 4 yds. long, and nearly 2 yds. wide, taped edges. 1 pair elegant DINING ROOM Curtains, designed from Old Lace, fashionable, 3½ yds. long, 60 ins. wide, taped edges. 1 pair BREAKFAST ROOM Curtains, rich floral pattern, latest style, 3 yds. long, 50 in. wide, taped. 1 pair pretty BEDROOM Curtains, 3 yds. long, about 43 in. wide, 1 Lady's Lace Handkerchief, 12 yds. useful washing Crochet Lace, white, 2 Lace D'Oyleys, 3 yds. of Point d'Esprit Lace, fine quality. Ecru sent if desired.
Given away with every Popular Parcel, 1 of Peach's "Registered Roller Blinds," with valance attached.
The best value ever offered. *Weldon's Journal* says: "Wonderful value, as I have personally tested." *The Lady*: "It is fabulous that a Guinea can buy so much." The Curtains are all the latest Recherche patterns, designed exclusively for our 1893 Popular Parcel. Money returned if not approved.
1893 Price List contains upwards of 300 Illustrations of Lace Curtains, Laces, Black Silk Flouncings, Mantles, Capes, Lace Novelties, &c., post free. P.O.O.'s payable to S. Peach & Sons, Lister Gate, Nottingham. Established 1857. Beware of Imitations.

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Cigarette Paper — Best & Purest

RUBBER STAMPS.—Your Monogram to mark Linen or Paper. Two letters, 1s.; three, 1s. 6d.; any name, 1s. 6d.; Box, Pad, and Ink included. Patterns Free. Carriage 2d. extra. Agents Wanted. Satisfaction guaranteed or money returned. P. W. IRETON & CO., 92 Gracechurch Street, London, E.C.

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Insist on your Decorators using
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Sold by Oilmen, Chemists, &c., everywhere.
Sole Manufacturers and Patentees—
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ALL WHO SUFFER FROM
CORNS
Should write for a packet of
AMERICORN PLASTER (Regd.)
Post free 12 stamps.
It removes Corns and Bunions in 3 days, without pain. As thin as silk. Takes up no room.
J. B. FOGGITT, Chemist, SOUTHPORT.

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Bilious & Liver Complaints
CURE
Indigestion, Flatulency, Lassitude, and Want of Tone.
In a Square Green Package.
SOLD EVERYWHERE.

DR. SCOTT'S PILLS
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Safest Family Medicine.
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Matchless on Land on Water Everywhere
"CALIFORNIAN"

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Hawkers, Drapers, Small Shopkeepers, New Beginners, &c., should send for a 10s. or 20s. parcel of useful and saleable PRINT FENTS OR REMNANTS. Carriage Paid on orders of 20s. and upwards.
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All P.O.'s to be made payable at Hooley Hill.

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PERFECTLY PURE AND FREE FROM ALUM.

SOLEROID FOR MEN AND BOYS, WOMEN, GIRLS, AND HOBBLEDEHOYS.
PAINT SOLEROID ON YOUR SOLES AND HEELS, and render them absolutely Waterproof and three times as Durable and Lasting. Not affected by Heat. SOLEROID has stood the test of years and is now in use all over the civilised world. Testimonials are constantly being received. Send post-card for copies and particulars. Names and full addresses given in every case. SIXPENCE WILL PROVE IT. Sample, post free, 6d., will fully treat Three Pairs Boots. Bottle, post free, 1s. 6d., nearly five times the quantity. Full instructions always enclosed. It will reduce your Cobbler's Bills to a minimum. H. M. NOBLE, Managing Director, SOLEROID, Ltd., 2, Gloster St., Brighton. Agents wanted everywhere.

A LADY writes:—
"Your Potted Beef is the BEST I ever tasted."
ONE OF MANY UNSOLICITED TESTIMONIALS.
LONDON Wholesale Agents, *H. PECK & Co.,* 220, Smithfield Market, E.C.

ASK YOUR GROCER FOR THEM, OR SEND 7½d. or 1/3 FOR SAMPLE JAR TO THE MAKER, Plumtree, SOUTHPORT

Will you do us a good turn by giving this copy to someone when you have read it?

PEARSON'S WEEKLY.

TO INTEREST, TO ELEVATE, TO AMUSE.

VOL. III.—No. 145.] TRANSMISSION AT BOOK RATES. WEEK ENDING APRIL 29, 1893. ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL. [PRICE ONE PENNY.

AN ANSWER.

Do you know you have asked for the costliest thing
 Ever made by the Hand above—
A woman's heart, and a woman's life,
 And a woman's wonderful love?

Do you know you have asked for this priceless thing
 As a child might have asked for a toy—
Demanding what others have died to win
 With the reckless dash of a boy?

You have written my lessons of duty out,
 Man-like you have questioned me:
Now stand at the bar of my woman's soul
 Until I have questioned thee.

You require your bread shall be always good,
 Your socks and your shirts should be whole;
I require your heart to be true as God's stars,
 And pure as heaven your soul!

You require a cook for your mutton and beef—
 I require a far better thing:
A seamstress you're wanting for stockings and shirt—
 I want a man and a king!

A king for the beautiful realm called home.
 And a man that the Maker, God,
Shall look upon as he did the first,
 And say, It is very good!

I am fair and young, but the rose will fade
 From the soft young cheek one day;
Will you love me then 'mid the falling leaves
 As you did 'mid the bloom of May?

Is your heart an ocean so strong and deep
 I may launch my all on its tide?
A loving woman finds heaven or hell,
 On the day she is made a bride.

I require all things that are good and true,
 All things that a man should be;
If you give this all, I would stake my life
 To be all you demand of me.

If you cannot do this—A laundress, a cook,
 You may hire, with little to pay,
But a woman's heart and a woman's life
 Are not to be won that way.

HARDLY FLATTERING.

A YOUNG Oxonian once commissioned a veterinary surgeon to look at a horse which was for sale.

This was the report which the "vet" sent to his client:

"Sir,—I have examined the horse. The interesting family of quadrupeds to which he belongs is liable to a great number of diseases and injuries, hereditary, climatic, accidental, and I have no hesitation in stating that he has got most of them.

"He would be a very precious acquisition, as an object lesson, in our veterinary college, but I do not feel justified in commending him to you, with a view to use or recreation."

HOW MANY WORDS DO YOU USE?

IT is astonishing how few words are really needed to transact the business of life, and how often these are called into requisition.

Some expert in such matters computes that with 1,000 words an ordinary man can say everything that is really essential, and of these he commonly uses only 400 or 500, reserving the remainder for extraordinary occasions, when some idea out of his usual line of thinking occurs to him, compelling an uncustomary strain on his verbal resources.

In just such emergencies the blessings of slang are manifest, one slang expression being made to do duty for a dozen dictionary words.

When he wishes to convey the idea that the weather is extremely cold, he says it is awfully cold; a few months later he discovers that it is awfully hot; at dinner his soup is awfully nice; the young lady on whom he called last evening was awfully pretty; and so on he goes, making the word answer the purpose of a whole vocabulary.

MIKE WAS FIRST.

Two Irishmen got a job to clean some lofty windows. Having no ladder, however, that would reach the windows, they were rather puzzled how to get to them.

"Pat," says Mike, "I have it. Get a plank, put it through the window. Oi'll sit on the plank outside, and you sit on the plank inside."

"All right," replied Pat.

All went well until Mike at the outside cried out, "Oi let me window leather fall."

"All right," again replied Pat; "stop where you are, and Oi'll get it."

Away went Pat downstairs, and getting into the street exclaimed, at the sight of his friend prostrate on the pavement:

"Be jabers, Mike, you're here first. Which way did you come?"

FOUR-HANDED INDIAN CHILDREN.

AT Berhampoor, where the largest ivory-carving trade of Asia is done, the children, who are taught from infancy that they are to do ivory carving as soon as they get old enough, are early instructed as to the use and handling of the carving tools. These tools are not many, and they are so rough and plain that you would wonder how such exquisite bits of carving could be done by them.

At first the children are given elephants to do, because elephants are considered quite simple to carve. Afterwards they do camels, bullocks, boats, carts, and sets of chess men. A Berhampoor boy's first lesson in ivory carving consists in learning how to pick up the tools with his feet.

After he has really begun the work of a carver, he would feel greatly ashamed if he were obliged to drop his work to pick up a tool which had fallen to the floor. After a time he becomes so expert in picking up things with his feet that he does not consider it any accomplishment at all to hold all his tools in this way, and he reaches for them, handing them to himself in a queer way which would make you exclaim:

"Surely these Indian boys have four hands!"

WILLING TO PAY.

WHEN the subject of doctors' fees is mentioned, a well-known physician likes to tell the story of a young man who was very ill and very poor, to whom he gave unremitting care, and finally nursed back to health.

Before he had recovered his strength, he dragged himself feebly to the doctor's office, and endeavoured to express his gratitude, which was not greater than his grief that he had nothing but thanks with which to repay the debt.

"Unless" said the young man hesitatingly, "you would be willing to accept payment in my way."

"What is your way?" inquired the doctor, with some amusement.

"I am a musician by profession," replied the young man. "I teach the flute, and I should like to give you some lessons upon it."

"Ah," exclaimed the doctor thoughtfully, "so you are a flute-player. I'll tell you," he said whimsically, "I am too busy a man to take lessons on the flute; but suppose you make yourself comfortable here in the office while I go my rounds, and *blow out* the amount you think you owe me!"

The young man, who appears to have been of a literal turn of mind, actually took his beloved flute from its bag and was about to begin the payment, when he caught the doctor's expression and saw that the suggestion was made in joke.

"He seemed so oppressed with gratitude and anxious to do something," says the doctor in telling this story, "that I let him play at an entertainment for some poor children not long after, and if flute playing has any value, he certainly blew out the entire amount of his indebtedness on that occasion, and seemed to be greatly relieved after it was over."

ADDED WORD COMPETITION.

No. 5.

SOVEREIGNS, PENCIL-CASES, POCKET-KNIVES

IN this Competition each letter of the alphabet has a distinct numerical value. Thus: "a" equals 1, "b" equals 2, "c" equals 3, and so on—"y" equals 25, and "z" equals 26.

Every word in the English language will, then, have a numerical value. For instance, "again" will be represented by 32. For,

a	equals	1
g	,,	7
a	,,	1
i	,,	9
n	,,	14
Total	..	32

We offer Five Sovereigns, Twenty-five Pencil-cases, and Twenty-five Pocket-knives to correct competitors. The Sovereigns will be given to the one, two, three, four, and five hundredth. The Pencil-cases to the first and every twenty-fifth. The Pocket-knives to the third and every twenty-seventh. In these cases the prizes stop when twenty-five have been awarded. The prizes are offered this week to those who find the word with the greatest numerical value in the current instalment—page 649 and part of 650 of the serial story, THE ANGEL OF THE REVOLUTION. Name, page, column, and line in which the word appears. Post-cards only, please.

He: "I am very fond of you."
She: "How well our tastes agree."
He: "What, are you fond of me?"
She: "Oh, no. Of myself."

A JOLLY old doctor said that people who were prompt in the payments always recovered in their sickness, as they were good customers, and physicians could not afford to lose them. A good hint and a sensible doctor.

A NEW WAY OF POPPING.—She: "Do you believe one's fate can be read in the hand, as people say?"

He: "To a certain extent. Give me your hand, for instance, and I can tell that your fate will be sure to be a happy one."

A LADY lion-tamer, young and fair, beckoned to the big lion, and it came and took a piece of sugar out of her mouth.

"Why, I could do that trick," exclaimed a spectator.

"What! you?" retorted the fair performer.

"Certainly—just as well as the lion!"

FRUIT VENDOR: "Why you notta tella me move on?"

Policeman: "Your cart is not in the way there."

Fruit Vendor: "Den I put its in da way, and I wants you tella me move on."

Policeman: "What for?"

Fruit Vendor: "Dat maka a big crowd, and I sell a banan."

MINISTER: "And so you're going to be a minister when you grow up, my little man?"

Tommy Yorick: "Yes. Mother says I'm just cut out for a minister."

Minister: "How so? Because you love to do good?"

Tommy Yorick: "No. Because I'm always getting sore throat and being ordered away for my health."

A WITTY gentleman having received an invitation from a wealthy but not over-refined lady, on arriving, was ushered into her presence. She was sitting in the library, surrounded by gorgeously-bound books.

"You see, Mr. W.," she said, "I need never be lonely, for here I sit surrounded by my best friends."

Mr. W. approached a shelf without replying, took down a volume which he perceived was uncut, and immediately observed with a gentle smile: "I am happy to find, Mrs. W., that, unlike the majority of people, you do not cut your friends."

Have you applied for a Subscription List for the F. A. F.? If not, why not?

SEEN FROM THE TRAIN.

As I take up my pen to write this story a feeling akin to terror begins to creep through my body, and I know that before an hour has elapsed I shall have lived over again, though in a shadowy form, the three hours of mortal agony that whitened the hair and furrowed the cheeks of a young man.

I have chosen this day for writing my story because it is the anniversary of the event it describes that took place five years ago.

Nelly and I had been married six months, and no man was happier than I. I told her so one sunny afternoon as we sat under one of the old oaks of which my country house garden was full, and she told me that she, too, felt herself the happiest woman on earth.

And as we sat there a message was handed to me by a boy from the village post-office. I trembled as I took the envelope. In that out-of-the-way spot, a telegram was looked upon in trepidation as the probable carrier of bad tidings, for joyous news is all too slow to reach its destination.

My wife gently pulled the missive from my hands and opened it. There was a great deal in a few words.

"Your brother is very ill. Come at once."

With a slight cough I drew out my watch, and as I did so the last train rumbled by the foot of my garden. The next went at 9.35 in the morning.

Whatever may be the condition of my physical courage, I am a very nervous man—nervous inasmuch as I fret and fume when any grief or misapprehension fills me.

Consequently, that evening I could do nothing but sit and brood over the calamity which had befallen my rother, gloomily watching my wife adroitly packing away into my portmanteau all the little necessaries that I for my part would have forgotten in the hurry of the moment.

Both of us were at breakfast the next morning by half-past eight, and at nine o'clock I arose from the table and prepared to leave, for the station in the village was a mile away from my house, although the railway ran almost through the garden.

"Shall I come to the station with you, Frank?" Nelly asked, as we strolled down towards the gate over the lawn.

"I don't think you had better, darling. It's too far," I said. Then, seeing her rueful countenance, I added, "but you may come as far as the bridge with me."

It was a perfectly lovely summer morning. A slight breath of air waved the flowers, shaking from off them the tiny dew drops that glistened and sparkled in the brilliant rays of the sun that fell in darts of light through the foliage of the trees.

Passing into the garden, Nelly picked a bunch of roseate pinks and a sprig of oak-leaf geranium, running back to me and pinning them in my coat, and saying with a smile that they would remind me of her.

Over the lawn we went, taking a short cut to the entrance gates, and we were soon on the bridge, looking down into the deep silent waters of the stream that ran through our garden, and watching the trout flashing merrily in the sun or lying idle and still in the shade.

"I will go down the river bank and see you pass by," said Nelly, as I kissed her good-bye. "Be sure and wave your handkerchief. Write the very minute you arrive. Good-bye, dear."

I hurried away, turning every now and then to wave my hand to the slight, girlish figure on the bridge.

I had but a few minutes to wait for the train. As it pulled up at the station I entered a compartment the only other occupant of which was a gentleman, a tall young man with sunburnt face and dark eyes.

I at once placed myself before the window, with handkerchief in readiness to wave to Nelly.

Very soon we came within sight of the river, and there, on the little bridge, stood my wife, her light muslin dress moving in the breeze, and her face turned anxiously towards the approaching train.

"I wish she would not stand on that ricketty plank," I said to myself; and even as the thought rose to my mind she staggered, clutched at the rotten hand-bar, and lost her balance and fell over into the deep, swift waters below.

For a moment the blood rushed to my head, then I went cold and clammy, and my knees shook and my teeth chattered. But only for a second. With a shrill cry I tried to get through the window, calling to my poor girl, over whom I had seen the dark waters close, and who now appeared on the surface with arms outstretched towards me.

"Keep up, Nelly—only for a moment! I shall be with you!" and I leant out and grasped the door-handle.

And as I did so I was pulled violently back into the compartment and thrown on the seat.

"Are you mad?" said the stranger who stood over me.

A minute had now gone by, and the river was out of sight. I did not answer. I simply lay where I had been thrown. I closed my eyes, and I felt sick and giddy and faint. Then I gasped for breath, and seemed to be choking. I saw again the poor white face as it went down under the cruel waters, I found myself clasped in her arms, the waters were warm, and sparkling and delicious, a little boat of coral formed beneath us shaped like a huge shell and drawn by the trout we had seen from the bridge. The banks of the stream opened wider and wider, and everything that grew on them was of gold and silver studded with precious stones, and the air was balmy and cool, and full of richly-plumaged birds that circled overhead, while the sun glistened on the gems that decked my Nelly's hair, and we went on and on——

The train was still rushing along as I opened my eyes, and found the young stranger forcing the mouth of a brandy-flask between my lips. He looked on me in pity.

"Nelly, Nelly!" I gasped, as the painful truth came back in force. Throwing my feet off the cushion I sat up, then tried to rise and go to the window.

"Be calm," he said, pressing me back. "I saw it myself. Who was she?"

But sitting there mute and haggard, I did not answer. He guessed how matters stood. At least, I believe he must have. He tried to console me, but I pushed him away, and sat bent double, staring in front of me with my hands pressed tightly between my knees.

The train drew up at the first stopping-place, and I got out, feeling strangely bewildered.

My companion, too, alighted.

"Shall I stop with you?" he asked kindly.

"No, no, thanks. I shall go back by the next train. I shall be better alone. Please, don't stop."

He pressed my hand with tears in his eyes. "Bear up, friend," he said. "Remember that He who sends the trial sends the strength to bear it."

I never forgot those words. Who he was I don't know, but since the moment I left him then, I have never seen him again.

Staggering like an inebriate, I crossed the line after the train had gone, and, walking up the platform, asked when the next down train was due.

"Next down train, sir? 2.12."

It was only just ten o'clock. To wait for that train meant four hours of fearful agony that could not be endured, four hours given to thoughts that would drive me mad and send me home a hopeless idiot.

"Can I drive?" I asked. "Is there no conveyance about the place that could take me back? Is there no train of any description before that time?"

I spoke vehemently. The little cluster of porters and passengers looked upon me in amazement. There must have been something strange about my appearance, for one of them asked me if I were ill.

To this polite question I made no answer. All I thought of was getting back home again, to where I had last seen my poor little Nellie standing on the rustic bridge, to where I had seen her totter, and fall, and—

"There'll be a cattle train due in an hour or thereabouts, sir. Maybe ye'll get a ride on the engine, or in a truck or brake."

In the relief of mind this intelligence afforded me I put five shillings into the grimy palm of the old porter, who, among the many blessings showered upon me, included one upon my wife, if, as he said, I had one. Heavens, if I had one! What pangs of agony went through me at those words. And I turned away from the group as one in a dream, pacing up and down the platform, with my own heartrending thoughts for my sole companion.

The fierce July sun became hotter and hotter, but still I walked up and down, up and down. Once, the station-master approached me, urging me to seek the shelter of the waiting-room and to take some refreshment at his expense. But I rudely thrust him aside, and he came no more, although I could see his face at times watching me curiously through the window of the booking office.

Ah, then how I gave the reins to my steeds of thought. How I let them tear along and madden me with their caprices! How I allowed them to draw picture after picture of my poor girl across the stage of my mind, pausing at each one that I might stamp every detail of all that was sad and wretched on my soul.

On one I saw the gay ball room where I had first met my Nelly. I felt again the charm of her soft eyes, and the tender pressure of her delicate hands thrilled me once more. Many other phantasmagoria passed along, each picture painted in vivid colours, the pathos of each standing out in relief, the pleasure portrayed in dull tints; and as one went by, and before the next followed, I thought of my darling, so full of life and beauty but two hours ago, and now—

A picture that thrilled me more than any other represented the old house at Maze, as we sat under the oak, when only yesterday I told her that I was the happiest man on earth. What mockery! The happiest man on earth!

Without dying completely from my vision, the picture faded, and in another we went through the garden in the early morn. She, in her white muslin gown and bright ribbons, the picture of health and beauty, ran and gathered me flowers. That reminded me, and I stopped in my monotonous walk, and pulled the pinks from my coat, kissed them passionately, and placed them in my pocket-book.

My poor Nelly. Now, she lay, cold and pulseless, her bright golden curls waving like weeds in the swift waters, while her beautiful head lay pillowed on the ooze of the river bed. It was terrible to dwell upon, yet I could do nothing but think of it. And so I went on, until the little station commenced to show signs of bustle, and I heard the distant rumbling of an approaching train.

It was a long time before the line of trucks appeared in sight, but when it finally drew up I went over and stepped on to the foot-plate.

"Here is a sovereign," I said to the driver. "Will you let me ride on the engine as far as Maze?"

"Certainly, sir, if you'll not mind getting down before we reach the station." He winked his eye knowingly, and took the matter lightly. How could I blame him. Happy man.

Of shunting trucks and picking up others there seemed no end. At length the train started, the cool air fanning my brow, and I gave one last look at the little wayside station at which I had spent the darkest hours of my life.

The jolting of the engine revived me, throwing my thoughts in other directions every now and again. But as the train slackened down on the approach to Maze Station, a sickening sensation spread over me, and I felt that I had not the strength to move from where I stood.

"Now, sir, if you wouldn't mind just dropping here. You can jump into the six-foot way so that you will not go over the bank. Ready? Here goes." He grasped my wrist and lowered me as the engine glided along.

I waited until the last truck had passed, then crossed the metals. Down over the embankment, running along by the stream, over the road bridge, through the entrance gates, across the lawn, into the house.

I did not stop to think the whole way. Instinct led me there. Perhaps if I had thought I should have thrown myself into the water, to follow my dear Nelly; to go just where she had gone, so that we might always be together.

In the parlour I found Mr. Haynes, the rector. He rose as I came in, taking my hands and looking into my eyes.

"You have heard, then?"

I was dazed, bewildered. "She is upstairs." My brow furrowed in perplexity. He raised his hand, lifted my hat from my head, and started. I afterwards learned that my hair was streaked with grey. Mrs. Haynes entered the room at that moment. She came over to me, saying:

"Perhaps you had better go upstairs, Mr. King. It is very sad, but you must bear up. She is lying in the front bedroom."

Slowly I went upstairs, dragging my trembling limbs in pain. At the door I hesitated, clutching the handle and forcing calmness on myself. Then I softly went in. The room was darkened, but through the closed Venetians bright rays of sunshine glinted on the bed where she lay. Nerving myself, I turned my head towards her figure, already seeing her pale and cold.

Was it a delusion, a cruel mockery, a freak of my vivid imagination? Nelly lay sleeping peacefully and calmly, her cheeks aglow, and her waves of golden hair damp and brushed off her forehead.

As I bent down she opened her eyes.

"Frank," she said softly.

I felt as though she had been given back to me from the dead. Holding her warm hand in mine, I sank down on my knees and thanked God for preserving my darling.

When the glad surprise was over, I found that she had been saved by some men working on the line, who had heard her cry, and gone to her assistance, just as my fellow-passenger threw me down on the seat.

* * * *

It is quite dark now, so I lay down my pen and fall to thinking. The quiet calm of this summer evening brings sweet solemn thoughts to my mind, and I see again the little darkened room where I sat by the bedside on this very same evening five years ago. Nelly is still as beautiful, and as much to me as ever. Her eyes have lost none of their lustre, nor her voice its sweetness, nor —Hark!

"Yes, Nelly, I'm coming!"

MRS. WOBBLES: "I shall never forget, dear, how idiotic you looked when you proposed to me."

Mr. Wobbles (with emphasis): "I was idiotic."

LAWYER (meeting friend in street): "I'm sorry for you, Short, but Snipps, the tailor, has put his account against you in my hands for collection."

Short: "And you're going to try and collect it, eh? Well, I'm sorry for you. Ta, ta, old man; you know my address."

AN amusing blunder is found in the index of a volume of Law Reports, where occurs this entry:

"The Lord Chief Justice, his great mind."

Naturally, respectful curiosity compelled the reader to turn at once to the page indicated in this quaint manner. And what did he find?

"The Lord Chief Justice said he had a great mind to commit the prisoner for contempt of Court."

A LITTLE school girl asked her teacher what was meant by "Mrs. Grundy." The teacher replied that it meant "the world."

Some days afterwards the teacher asked the geography class, to which this little bud of promise belonged: "What is a zone?"

After some hesitation the girl brightened up and replied:

"I know. It's a belt round Mrs. Grundy's waist!"

A grain of sand would cover one hundred scales of the human skin, and yet each scale covers from 300 to 500 pores.

A MEAN ADVANTAGE.

THE man had informed a number of his friends that he was going down to give the editor a thumping, and his friends, who knew the editor, tried to dissuade him, because they had seen a few weeks who had escaped. But it was no use; he was bound to go.

They waited across the street, however, with an ambulance to receive him when the call was finished. In about fifteen minutes he came out, without even his necktie disarranged and not a scratch visible.

"Hello," they said in surprise, "he wasn't there?"

"Yes, he was."

"But you didn't see him?"

"Yes, I did, and I slapped his face and walked all over him."

"Didn't he make any resistance?"

"Not a bit."

"What was the matter with him?"

"Nothing. I had one of his papers in my pocket containing an insurance policy, good for £200 if I were killed, and for £4 a week if I were injured. I showed it to him, and then I went for him, and he didn't raise a finger."

SATAN A LANDLORD.

THERE is but one spot on the earth's surface, as far as "the curious man" knows, that has been really and truly willed, deeded, and bequeathed to his Satanic majesty. This spot lies four and a half miles south of Helsingfors, Finland.

A few years ago, Lars Huolarinen died in the little town of Fiskjarvi in the above-named country, leaving considerable property in the shape of real estate. How he had come into possession of so much land no one seemed to know, but as he was a very bad citizen, it was generally admitted that he was in league with Wihtahansu (Satan), and that they had had many business deals with each other.

This somewhat startling opinion was verified when Old Huolarinen died, for, upon opening his will, the magistrate found a certified warranty deed enclosed therein which deeded to Satan all of his (Huolarinen's) earthly possessions.

The will was to the same effect. The family have repeatedly tried to break the will, but, so far, have been unsuccessful; thus the records plainly show that his sulphuric majesty has a legal right and title to some excellent grounds in the near vicinity of Helsingfors.

The simple people of the neighbourhood have changed the course of the road which formerly skirted the Huolarinen homestead, and declare that they would not enter the possession of Satan and Co., for all the money that three such estates would bring.

RUNNING INTO A QUEEN.

WEYMOUTH, an old watering-place, was for some years frequently visited by King George and Queen Charlotte. A German, Colonel Landmann, was summoned to the place one season to plan the erection of a tower in accordance with the King's wishes. This gentleman gives an amusing account of his unconventional meeting with the Queen:—

I stood at the window of a caricature shop with several persons, when I heard from behind me a voice repeating: "The Queen! the Queen!" which induced me to search with renewed diligence throughout the caricatures in the window for one of the Queen to which I thought the voice had alluded, but in which I was unsuccessful.

The clocks striking six reminded me that unless I hastened I should be too late to see the Queen and the Princesses on their way to their bathing-machines.

I moved on, keeping my eye fixed on the pictures, however, in search of the Queen. Suddenly I felt that I had come into contact with a lady whom to save herself and myself from falling, I encircled with my arms.

At the same moment, observing that the person whom I so embraced was a little old woman, with a small black bonnet, exactly similar to those worn by poor and aged females, and that she wore a short plain, scarlet cloth coat, I exclaimed:

"Hello, old lady, I very nearly had you down."

In an instant I felt the old lady push me from her with energy and indignation, and I was seized by a great number of persons, who grasped me tightly by the arms and shoulders, whilst a tall, stout fellow in a scarlet livery stood close before my face, sharply striking the pavement with the heavy ferrule of a long golden-headed cane, his eyes flashing fire, and loudly repeating:

"The Queen, the Queen, the Queen, sir!"

"Where? where? where?" I loudly retorted.

"I am the Queen!" sharply replied the old lady.

The story is finished by a description of how the Colonel fell on his knees and humbly apologised, and the Queen said:

"We forgiff; you must be more careful; fery rude—fery rude, indeed; we forgiff. There you may go."

Whereupon exit the gallant Colonel, loudly cheered by the mob.

FIVE WEEKS BENEATH AN AVALANCHE.

IN the valley of the Upper Stura at the foot of the Alps, is the little hamlet of Bergolette. In the winter of 1755 the falls of snow were uncommonly heavy. On the 19th of March, the parish priest, who was on his way to the church, heard a noise from the mountains, and casting up his eyes, he saw two avalanches descending towards the village. He gave the alarm to some villagers, and then retreated into his own house.

The avalanches came down and buried over thirty houses, and twenty-two persons were found to be missing—among them the parish priest, who had given the alarm. The amount of snow which lay over the ruined dwellings was about forty-two feet deep, two hundred and seventy feet long, and sixty feet wide.

When the surviving peasants had shaken off the terror and depression which such an event must necessarily cause, they set about trying to save any life or property possible. More than three hundred peasants from neighbouring villages came to their assistance. But they could do little; the thickness of the snow was so great; and the snow continued to fall from the clouds in such amount that they were obliged to discontinue their fruitless exertions, and wait till the setting in of the warm April winds, which would partly melt the gigantic snow piles.

On the 18th of April the villagers returned to their melancholy task. It was with no hope of finding any human being alive. One of them, named Roccia, whose whole family was beneath the avalanche, was most active in the search. By the 24th of April he had advanced so far that, after breaking through six feet of ice, he could touch the ground with a long pole. Three friends worked with him.

The four worked vigorously, and made their way, at length, into Roccia's house, but no one, dead or living, was there. As it was probable that, at the fatal moment, the victims had sought shelter in the stable, which was about a hundred feet from the house, Roccia and his companions directed their efforts in that quarter.

After they had burrowed for some time, one of them thrust a pole through an aperture, and, on withdrawing it, heard a hoarse, faint voice say:

"Help, oh, dear husband! Help, dear brother! We are alive."

They now worked with redoubled activity, and soon made a considerable opening. And there, beneath the snow, Roccia to his joy found his wife, daughter, and a sister-in-law.

The three sufferers were incapable of moving, and were shrunken almost to skeletons. They were carefully removed from their place of imprisonment and conveyed to the house of a friend, and proper measures adopted for their restoration. In a few days they were fairly recovered.

Their lives were preserved during these long five weeks in the following manner:—They had taken refuge in the rack and manger, which, being strong, had withstood the strain, though the roof fell. Fortunately two goats were near them, which supplied them with goat's milk in quantity sufficient to sustain life.

To feed the goats was of prime importance. Immediately over the manger was a hole into the hay-loft; through the hole one of the women was able to pull down fodder into the rack, and when she could no longer reach it, the sagacious animals climbed upon her shoulders, and helped themselves.

Through the whole of their imprisonment they were in total darkness.

After the first five or six days they suffered little from hunger, though a quart of goat's milk had to suffice for the three. They suffered far more from the excessive coldness of the melted snow-water that trickled over them, and from the constrained posture into which they were forced.

THE Man: "You say that women should have votes because they understand politics as well as men do. What are your views on the Ulster difficulty?"

The Lady: "You great goose! There's no Ulster difficulty. It's crinolines."

THE American journalist has a very smart way of expressing himself, but it will be a long time before he excels the neat description given of the applause which is now so generally accorded to popular preachers in Transatlantic churches.

"The clapping of hands was so continuous that the only way of stopping it was to pass round the collection plate, which speedily diminished the applause—and the audience."

"ONLY think, Jack; last night I groped under the bed for the bootjack, could not find it at first, so felt further back, and what do you suppose I dragged forth? A human hand covered with blood."

"Goodness gracious, how dreadful! Of course you sent at once for the police, and made further investigations?"

"No; I simply applied a strip of court plaster, for it was my own finger that had been torn open by a splinter."

THE FIRST MELBOURNE LAND SALE.

ON the 1st of June, 1837, an interesting historical event took place on the site now occupied by Melbourne. The incident we refer to was the first land sale in Melbourne. As the Government were scarce of funds at the time they decided that the future site of Melbourne, as fixed by Mr. Russell, should be sold by public auction in blocks of half an acre each.

Previous to the sale, however, three streets were added to the plan, which divided the blocks lengthways. The auctioneer who conducted the sale stood upon the stump of a tree which was situated in the vicinity of what is now Collins Street. The terms of the sale were 10 per cent. deposit, remainder payable in one month.

At this sale 40 square allotments brought about £1,800, or an average of about £45 each. The value of these 40 square allotments now is over £10,269,000 or an average of over £256,000 each. Sixty long allotments brought about £1,700 or an average of about £28 10s. per allotment.

The value of these sixty long allotments now is over £8,662,000, or an average of £144,000 per long allotment. Portions of this land were lately selling at £2,000 a foot

A NEW SCHEME.

"I REPRESENT the Ne Plus Ultra Birthday Present Insurance Company," said the brisk young agent as he stepped into Mr. Grassam's office.

"What on earth is that?" asked Grassam. "I never heard of it."

"I suppose not, sir, for the company is one of very recent organisation. It comes, however, to fill a long-felt want."

"What is its object? Does a policy in your company guarantee its holder a birthday present?"

"No, sir, that is not it. You have, no doubt, received birthday presents from your wife."

"Yes."

"Your wife has credit at the various shops in the neighbourhood, and consequently the presents she buys are likely to be charged instead of paid for at the time of purchase."

"Well?"

"It frequently happens that a husband under the circumstances, has to pay for his own present when the quarterly bills come in. Of course he doesn't always have to do so, and it is this uncertainty which makes a policy to our company valuable. We will engage, sir, to pay for the presents your wife buys for you, if she neglects to do so. With a policy issued by us in your pocket, you can enjoy anything your wife gives you next birthday, serene in the thought that in any event you will not have to pay for it. Shall I quote you premiums?"

"No, no, I'll think it over. Call again."

THE OLDEST OF ALL CHURCHES.

To see the oldest of all churches we must go to Rome—the capital of Christendom to-day, as she has been for 1,800 years. There, not far from the great church of St. Maria Maggiore, in a street bearing the same name, is the much smaller church of St. Pudenziana, which trustworthy tradition, as well as the opinion of archæological experts, declares to be the most ancient of the Christian edifices of Rome.

A most interesting story is connected with this church, but much too long for the space assigned me. Here are the leading points, however.

About the middle of the first century a certain Roman senator, named Pudens, had a house on this spot. He was a Christian convert, and, it is said, a distant relative of Paul the Apostle, who lodged with him from A.D. 41 to 50, and converted his two daughters, Praxedes and Pudentiana.

Pudens seems to have kept a sort of "open house" for all Christians—especially those who came from abroad—and was respected and beloved by all the followers of the then despised and persecuted faith.

For the religious uses of himself and guests he built a small chapel in this house, and when he died in 96, and his wife a year later, his daughters added a baptistery, the plans for which were drawn by Pius, the then Bishop of Rome. All the Christian slaves belonging to the family were emancipated, and ninety-six neophytes baptised here on Easter Day—of 97 probably.

In course of time a church was erected on the site of the original house of Pudens, and consecrated by the Bishop in 108 or 145—authorities differ as to the date.

This church, dedicated to St. Pudenziana, was successively restored (never entirely rebuilt) by Adrian in the eighth century, by Gregory VII. and Innocent II. in the twelfth, and finally brought nearly to its present form by Cardinal Gaetana in 1597.

The front, comparatively modern, was handsomely restored in our own day by Cardinal Bonaparte. Cardinal Wiseman, the immediate predecessor of Cardinal Manning, was titular Cardinal of this most historic church.

Some blue-ribboner has discovered that women of beer-drinking countries have bigger feet and hands than those in places where no malt liquors are consumed.

QUESTIONS WORTH ANSWERING.

REPLIES.

1401. What is the Greatest Distance to which Electric Power has so far been Transmitted?

On the experimental line erected in the summer of 1891, from Lauffen to Frankfort-A.-M., a distance of 109 miles, 100 horse-power was transmitted. At Lauffen a turbine was fixed in the river Neckar to drive a powerful electric machine. The electric currents generated were transmitted to Frankfort by means of three copper wires, each one-fiftieth of a square inch in section. The wires were supported by tall poles, 10,000 porcelain insulators being employed. At Frankfort the currents supplied motors. The tests made by the scientific jury appointed showed that 107 horse-power was generated at Lauffen, and the work done at Frankfort was equal to 78 horse-power. The utilisation of Niagara Falls for generating power to supply the manufacturing towns within a radius of 150 miles is at present being pushed forward by an American company. In 1892 the Oerlikon Works of Zürich, who constructed the experimental line to Frankfort, made a bid to transmit 5,000 horse-power from Niagara to Chicago, a distance of nearly 500 miles.

1402. Are there any Natural Springs which Foretell Changes in the Weather?

Major Jones, the Government agent who has charge of the roads and waters of the Yellowstone Park, was shown a barometer spring during a recent tour to the Shoshone range of mountains which skirts the park on the east. It rises from a mound of travertine on a small creek in the north-east portion of the park, and its waters are highly charged with gases and salts, chiefly of sulphur and soda. At the source there is a strong sediment, and this sediment passes through remarkable changes of colour in advance of changes in the weather. In constant fair weather it is of a light pearly grey; approaching heat changes this to red; rain or violent storms are foretold by a sudden blackening of the deposit. So far as has been observed, the spring is an infallible barometer, even more so than the so-called breathing-wells of Illinois, Iowa, Oregon, and Kansas, which respond by changes in their height and flow of water to changes in the atmospheric pressure, just as the mercurial column in a barometer does.

1403. What is now the Highest Speed at which a Moving Body can be Photographed?

By far the quickest and most wonderful photographs ever taken are those of rifle bullets in their flight through the air. When it is known that a magazine rifle bullet is moving with a velocity of 2,000 feet a second, that is, at the rate of 1,360 miles an hour—twenty times as fast as the quickest express train—it will be understood that by no ordinary contrivance, such as the opening and closing of a shutter, could this be accomplished. But by calling in the aid of electricity a sharply-defined picture is obtained, not only of the bullet, but of certain curves which are seen before and behind it. These are the compressed layers of air caused by the bullet forcing its way along, and are beautifully defined in the photographs; they are much the same as the ripples seen on the smooth surface of a pond when a duck swims across it. Absolutely the most rapid photograph which has been taken was that of an aluminium bullet fired through one of the new service rifles. Tested by Smith's chronograph, this bullet had a velocity of 3,000 feet a second, or over 2,000 miles an hour. This was accomplished by Mr. Boys, F.R.S., of the Royal College of Science, London, last year. But the first man to take these very quick photographs was Professor Mach, of Prague, upon whose apparatus Mr. Boys has considerably improved. Mr. F. J. Smith, of Oxford, has succeeded in photographing various movements of animals by means of the electric spark. It is well known that when a cat is held by its four legs in an inverted position, with its back almost touching the ground, it will get round with remarkable rapidity and alight on the floor on all four feet without touching at all with its back and in defiance of all dynamics. Mr. Smith has taken spark photographs of these movements which are exceedingly interesting. [The writer of the above reply sends a photograph taken by himself of a bullet travelling at the rate of 3,000 feet per second.]

1404. Is there any Single Plant (Reply 1376) that bears alternately Flowers of Totally Different Colours?

This is by no means an unknown phenomenon. Pallus, when exploring the banks of the Volga, remarked that a species of anemone, the *Anemone patens*, sometimes bore white flowers, sometimes yellow, and sometimes red flowers. This phenomenon, still unexplained, is, however, common enough. The field-pimpernel, so common in our country districts, frequently displays this change. Usually its flower is of a vermilion red, but it is also sometimes of a magnificent sky-blue, which fact made some botanists think there were two different species. A pretty little plant of the genus myosotis, which is met with in our arid grounds, varies still more singularly in its colour, for on the same stalk we find at the same time red, yellow, and blue flowers—a peculiarity to which this species owes the name of *Myosotis diversicolor* which has been given to it. Other plants display a still more remarkable phenomenon, for in them the same flower changes its colour at different hours of the day. This happens with the *Hibiscus mutabilis*, the corollas of which are white in the morning, become rose-coloured towards the middle of the day, and in the evening take on a beautiful red tint.

1405. How many of the Mental and Intellectual Faculties are employed in Dreaming?

The answer to this question may be given from two points of view, and will vary accordingly. The disciple of the materialistic school would include intellect in mind, and both in the interaction of the brain-cells. He would say that all the mental faculties are employed in dreaming, saving only that of the will. He will also ignore the moral sense as a mental faculty distinct from intellect, and maintain that crimes may be committed in dreams without the possibility of exciting horror in the mind of the dreamer. On the other hand, those who believe that the brain is merely the material machine made use of by an agent known only through its effects produced through the brain, will hold that it is quite possible that in the dreams of a person of high mental development and education, not only is the will powerfully exerted, either to prolong a pleasant, or cut short an unpleasant dream, but that in the latter case the moral faculties, and through them the will, are so powerfully exerted as sometimes to cut short the dream, and waken the sleeper in a state of intense horror, and often self-disgust at the imaginary actions committed in the dream. The experience of persons possessing high imaginative faculties would appear to support the latter view, and therefore to show that all mental and intellectual faculties can be, and are, under certain circumstances, exercised in dreaming.

1407. Has a Satisfactory Definition of Electricity ever been Given?

No. Scientific men can only say what it is not. It is analogous to heat. When work is done by heat, the temperature must fall in due proportion. A certain portion of the heat disappears, and is transformed into work. When electricity does work it falls from a higher to a lower pressure, but, unlike heat, no part of it is destroyed. It is like water doing work by falling from a higher to a lower level and, like water, no part of it ceases to exist. It is not material. It is not motion. It is something quite different from both, and as yet unconceived.

1408. What is the Horse-power, in Electrical Energy, of an average Flash of Lightning?

The energy contained in a cubic mile of thunder-cloud is sufficient to raise a weight of a million tons seventy feet high. The horse-power of an average flash one mile long is 370 billion horse-power, the duration of the flash being one-millionth of a second. The current of electricity in a lightning flash is furiously strong, but the quantity of electricity conveyed is very small—not enough to decompose one-seventh of a grain of water.

1408. Which is the Most Horrible Plant in Nature?

This would appear to be the kamadoog, or "devil-thistle" of Java. Its leaves are broad and heart-shaped; their edges are roughly jagged like the teeth of a saw, and their two surfaces covered with white hairy down. When brought into contact with the skin, however gently, these leaves cause pain so intense that the muscles will work with violent spasmodic motions, and stiffen up in knots as if drawn together by the most intense cramp. This horrible plant is sometimes used to flog criminals with in Java, and on such occasions the strokes are laid on as lightly as possible until quite the end of the punishment, when they are increased in severity. The only effect produced on the skin is to make it look puffy and inflamed and to cover it with very small blisters. The torture is so intense that the victim as a rule goes mad, and frequently dies from the extreme nervous shock, and the high fever which invariably follows. With the kamadoog may be mentioned such tropical stinging plants as the *Laosaceæ* and *Molpighiaceæ*, the Indian poison-nettle, or "devil's leaf," and the Chilian tupa, which has the extraordinary faculty of blinding for some hours a person who unwarily touches it. If one could associate moral ideas with plants, such insectivorous plants as the sundew, which attracts insects with the promise of honey and then devours them, might also be included in the list.

1409. Has the Killing of Sick and Aged Relatives ever been a Recognised Custom in Civilised Europe?

Yes, strange as it may appear, this barbarous and unnatural custom obtained until the Middle Ages, in both Sweden and Poland, in which latter country it was not dropped until the thirteenth century, or some three hundred years after the Poles had embraced Christianity. In Poland a pointed axe was used, which some consider as the original of the "pole-axe," while in Sweden there may still be seen in some of the museums the heavy clubs which were once used to give the happy despatch to those whom age had robbed of their working and fighting power, and so, in the popular estimation, made their lives worthless to themselves and the community. A similar custom obtained at an earlier date in Sardinia, called the Accabatura, or "knocking on the head," and there existed a class of public executioners called Accabature, whose business it was to carry it out. Some authorities say that the custom was practised at Bora as late as the middle of last century, but the Sardinians of to-day deny that that is the case.

1410. Are Animals capable of appreciating Natural Beauty—such, for instance, as that of a Landscape?

The power of appreciating beauty, whether natural or artificial, is acknowledgedly peculiar to man. Animals can appreciate, to a certain extent, form, colour, and sound, which may fairly be called a sense of the beautiful; but with man such sensations are intimately associated with complex ideas and trains of thought. Darwin, in his "Descent of Man," says: "Obviously no animal would be capable of admiring such scenes as the heavens at night, a beautiful landscape, or refined music. Such high tastes are acquired through culture, and depend on complex associations; they are not even enjoyed by barbarians, or by uneducated persons." To this may be added the fact that observation and experiment have proved that, as we descend the scale of life, the eye itself becomes more and more imperfect in its powers of adaptability, perception, and discrimination, from the monkey, which alone shares with man the power of accommodation, to insects, which cannot distinguish form.

CONDITIONS.

We shall be glad to receive replies to any of the questions asked here from our readers. Each reply must bear the writer's name and address. We shall print the best reply to each question, and shall pay for all matter printed at our ordinary rate of two guineas a column. The same reader may send replies to any number of queries. Envelopes should be marked "Replies," in the top left-hand corner, and answers to the questions in any issue of the paper must reach us by first post on the Tuesday of the week following that for which the paper is dated. Payment will only be made for replies published. Authorities on which replies are based must be given. Half-a-crown will be paid on publication for every question received which is considered worthy of insertion.

QUESTIONS.

1431. Why does the population of Scotland increase so slowly in comparison with that of other civilised countries?

1432. In which department of art or industry has competition produced the most disastrous results?

1433. Which are the four most momentous dates in British history?

1434. Which literary work has advanced the most improbable scientific theory which has afterwards been verified in practice?

1435. Which sovereign of this country since the Conquest has had the least tenable title to the throne?

1436. Which is the costliest mile of railway in the world?

1437. How many of our so-called common weeds might be profitably used as vegetables?

1438. Which civilised country exhibits the greatest extremes of prosperity and misery?

1439. In which occupation are the wages paid most disproportionate to the work done for them?

1440. Which important food-stuff is most overlooked and wasted?

IMPORTANT TO ALL WHO EMPLOY CONVEYANCES IN THEIR BUSINESS.

All who Drive or employ Drivers are liable to have claims made upon them by third parties for compensation for personal injuries received, damage done to property, etc., etc., in consequence of being run over, and in the event of collisions, etc., often resulting in heavy pecuniary loss, law expenses, and loss of time.

This risk can be covered by a Policy of Assurance from the Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation, Limited, established 1871,

40, 42, and 44, MOORGATE STREET, LONDON, E.C.,

Particulars on Application

Have you tried the Added Word game yet?

"HOW DOTH THE LITTLE BUSY BEE!"

BENEATH these shaded elms I sit and muse
Upon the littleness of worldly fame.
This leafy, leisured ease who would not choose
In lieu of sordid wealth or empty name?

Ah! this is perfect peace. All Nature's mute,
Save for a bee, that flits with lazy drone:
He comes towards me. Pish! keep off, you brute!
He's stung my ear. Away! Relief—he's gone!

How poor a thing ambition's striving seems,
To waste one's life to win the world's decree!
Now resting here, life seems an endless dream,
Without a wish—If I could grab that bee.

A mossy bank of violets bears my head,
The fragrant zephyrs woo me to repose:
Let glory e'en her grandest favours shed,
I feel—He's made a dead set on my nose.

Through trellised bow'rs of verdant filagree,
The heavens spread their calm, cerulean plain;
A lark pours forth her song, so full, so free,
And seems to say—Why, there he is again.

It makes one feel in love with ev'ry kind
And mercy seems o'er harsher moods to soar;
Oh! may she ever rule this wayward mind,
And patient love—I'll have that vile bee's gore.

Thus let me spend in peace this earthly span,
Nor know the city's dull satiety.
Oh, let me die unmourned, unpraised by man,
Then life will be—will be—Oh, hang the bee!

A QUESTION NOT WORTH DISCUSSING.

WHEN the late Duke of Marlborough was in America, he was once making a tour of inspection over one of the Chicago cable lines, and came across a cable car driver, who was a typical Yankee, born and bred in the State of Connecticut.

"Can you stop the car quickly?" asked his Grace.

"I jist reckon ye kin bet yer life I ken, Mist'rr Duke."

"How soon?"

"In about two yards," replied the Yankee.

"Nonsense," sharply exclaimed his Grace.

The next minute the Duke was busy picking himself out of a sand bank by the side of the train line, into which the abrupt stoppage of the car had thrown him. As he quietly brushed himself the Yankee smiled and remarked:

"I hope yer ain't hurt, Mr. Duke. Guess yer think I kin stop her suddint now, don't yer?"

AMBER AND ITS USES.

THE value of amber, familiarised as the substance is in "smokers' requisites," is far greater than the majority imagine. Small pieces, of indifferent quality, suffice for the mouthpieces of pipes and for isolated ornaments, and, though the prices charged for even such specimens as these are far above their actual worth, they are comparatively cheap.

In necklaces, however, where every bead has exactly to match its fellow, or in the larger articles, requiring to be cut from a single piece of considerable size, the cost and real worth of the fossil gum rises so rapidly that in certain cases it deserves, if the money charged for it be any criterion, to rank with the precious minerals, and many pieces of amber in the rough state are worth more than their bulk in gold.

Yet even this does not approach by a long way the esteem in which antiquity held amber; for not only was it the oldest of gems, and therefore, in a measure, magnified by traditional reputation, but it was supposed to possess amazing occult properties.

It was worn all over Northern Italy as a preventive of goitre, just as it is worn to-day by the people of Arabia as a talisman against the evil eye.

More powerful than sorcery and witchcraft, it was an amulet that made poisons harmless; ground up with honey and oil of roses, it was a specific for deafness, and with Attic honey for dimness of sight. Nor is this claim of medicinal virtue altogether without foundation in fact, for its efficacy as a defence of the throat against chills—owing, probably, to the extreme warmth when in contact with the skin, and the circle of electricity so maintained—has been tested and substantiated.

The ancients, however, were not content with mystic curative power in the solid substance, for they ascribed valuable properties to it in combustion, admiring the perfume that resulted not only for its resinous fragrance, but for its healthiness, thereby detecting in the fossil pine gum the same virtues that modern physic attributes to the living pine trees.

A BUSY DOCTOR.

DR. LIDDELL'S morning levées were crowded beyond description. It was his pride and boast that he could feel his patient's pulse, look at his tongue, sound him with his stethoscope, write his prescription, and pocket his fee in a space of time varying from two to five minutes.

One day an army man was shown into the consulting room, and underwent what might be called the instantaneous process. When it was completed the patient shook hands with the doctor, and said:

"I am especially glad to meet you, as I have often heard my father, Colonel Forester, speak of his old friend, Dr. Liddell."

"What!" exclaimed the doctor, "are you Dick Forester's son?"

"Most certainly I am."

"My dear fellow," exclaimed the doctor, "fling that prescription into the fire, and sit down and tell me what's the matter with you."

CURLING TONGS AT SEA.

IT is customary to say that modern science has conquered the dangers of the open sea except that of fog. Those who say so are mistaken. We build ships that can buffet any wave and out-ride the most furious gales. But every one of them carries in her saloon a source of danger more threatening than any that tempest brings or the forces of Nature create.

There is always the woman with a fringe which persists in getting out of curl. That woman provides in advance for the emergency. She arms herself against the danger of appearing at dinner with unkempt forelock. She surreptitiously introduces a pair of curling irons and a spirit lamp into her cabin, and, in spite of placard warnings and peremptory prohibitions, she lights the lamp every day before the altar of her devotion.

She knows, of course, that every time she does this she imperils the lives of hundreds of human beings.

But would you have a little matter like that interfere with the essential processes of the toilette? Is the woman with a fringe to be expected to appear with limp locks at the captain's table merely that a lot of people who are nothing to her may feel safer against a roasting?

The purser, when he finds her out, tells her that her act is criminal. But the purser is only a man, wholly incapable of feminine points of view. The captain may threaten her with irons if she repeats the offence; but how is the captain to know if she closes her cabin door?

And so fringes are curled and lives risked and ships set on fire just to gratify a passing whim for self-adornment.

UNEXPECTED REPLIES.

THE gift of repartee is an invaluable one. There is nothing which flabbergasters the ordinary individual more than a sudden unlooked-for answer, whether it be witty or simply smart.

Montesquieu was once addressed by a bore who said:

"Monsieur le President, to show my devotion I would give you my head."

"Well, I will accept that gift," was the reply, "for small presents cement friendship," and the first speaker curled up.

There is a good story told of Henry IV. of France, which shows what a kind nature he had, and that he possessed a keener sense of humour than is usual among such spoilt members of the community.

MM. De Aubigné and De la Force were sleeping together in the King's bed-chamber. Believing his Royal Highness was in the arms of Morpheus, M. De Aubigné said aloud to his comrade, "Your master is the most ungrateful of men."

M. De la Force was half asleep, and asked him to say it again, when Henry suddenly sat up in his bed and cried, "Wake up; he is trying to tell you I am the most ungrateful of men."

"Pray go to sleep, sire," said De Aubigné calmly, "we've a great deal more we want to say about you."

Obedient to the hint, the monarch turned on his side and at all events pretended to fall asleep again, nor did the bold courtier hear more of the adventure. The liberty taken with any other monarch of the day would very probably have led to imprisonment, decapitation, or something equally unpleasant.

Sometimes a retort is none the less smart for being on paper.

Once upon a time there was an impertinent youth who amused himself by showing the following lines of his own composition to the ladies of his acquaintance:

Men scorn to kiss among themselves, and scarce would kiss a brother;
But women want to kiss so much, they kiss and kiss each other.

Whereupon a young lady who knew a thing or two scribbled a reply on the back of an envelope which knocked the young man right off his feet:

Men do not kiss among themselves, and 'tis well that they refrain;
The bitter dose would vex them so, they would never kiss again.
As sometimes on poor womans' lips is applied this nauseous lotion,
We have to kiss among ourselves as a counteracting potion.

A legal dignitary, who had risen "from the ranks," was chaffed by an opposing counsel for "having begun life as a barber's boy."

"'Tis true that I did so," retorted that gentleman in a soft, carefully modulated voice, "and if you had been in a similar station, you would have remained there until the present day." Which shut the domineering barrister up like a telescope.

Lord Rowton tells of a lady friend of his who was quite celebrated for the unexpected repartees she would occasionally shoot out.

An acquaintance was bewailing the sad fate of a mutual friend who had made an unfortunate marriage.

"If I were in such a state I should die," said the friend.

"And I should kill," was the brisk rejoinder.

I believe she meant it, too, adds the recounter.

A would-be suicide was once saved by a labouring man. He came before the magistrate to give evidence and asked for an indemnification so that he should not lose the day's wages through his absence. The magistrate replied he could not see his way to granting that. Then, by way of compensation, he made some complimentary remarks on the prisoner's promptness in assisting the would-be suicide. "Of course," he added, "you could not have gone on and left him there."

"Wish I had," said the grumbling witness, which was very true to human nature.

OLD Lady (in a shoe shop): "Have you felt slippers?"
Small Boy Clerk (solemnly): "Yes, ma'am, many a time."

THE tail coat flirtation is the latest. A wrinkled coat-tail bearing a dusty toe mark means, "I have spoken to your father."

HUSBAND: "My dear, we will have to begin to economise right off."
Wife: "Dear me! What has happened?"
Husband: "Cigars have gone up."

WOMAN: "You seem to be a strong healthy man. Can't you get along?"
Man: "No, mum. I hain't had no means of support since last July."
Woman: "Were you thrown out of work?"
Man: "No, mum; but me wife broke her arm, and she's not been able to do a week's washing since."

Eighty-Two claims have been paid.

INSURANCE AGAINST GENERAL ACCIDENTS

ACCORDING TO CONDITIONS GIVEN BELOW,

SPECIALLY GUARANTEED BY THE

OCEAN ACCIDENT ASSURANCE CORPORATION, Limited.

£25 INSURANCE COUPON. £10

£25 *will be paid by the above Corporation to the Legal Representatives of any person killed by an accident to the train, steamboat, Tramway, Omnibus, or other public conveyance in which he or she was travelling as a passenger, or while walking on any street or public road within the United Kingdom as a private individual, should death result within one month after such injury, and the like amount will be paid should such injury not prove fatal, but result in the complete and irrecoverable loss of sight in both eyes, or the loss by actual separation of two legs, two arms, or a leg and an arm.*

£10 *will be paid should such injury only result in the loss as above defined of sight in one eye, or the loss of one arm or one leg, and £5 will be paid should such injury only result in the fracture of an arm or leg.*

£5 *will be paid to any person who shall sustain a fracture of an arm or leg while engaged in playing Football, or while Cycling.*

Provided in all above cases that the person so killed or injured was the owner of this Insurance Coupon, with his or her usual signature written underneath, when the accident on which the claim is based occurred.

This Insurance entitles the holder to the benefit of, and is subject to the conditions of, the "Ocean Accident and Guarantee Company, Limited, Act, 1890, Risks No. 2, 3, 5, and 6."

This Insurance is limited to One Coupon for each holder, and is not invalidated by any Insurance (other than Coupon) with this or any other Accident Company, but is in addition thereto.

Notice of Claim must be made to MR. C. ARTHUR PEARSON, *Temple Chambers, London, E.C., within seven days of the accident.*

*Signature*_____

(See column 3, page 651.)

Available from the morning of April 22nd, 1893, till midnight, April 29th, 1893.

A hundred and sixty-nine Scotch mountains rejoice in the prefix of "Ben."

SOMETHING NEW AND STRANGE.

Under this heading we publish brief accounts of new and curious inventions and discoveries. Should any readers have something exceptional of the kind which they would like to communicate to the world at large, we shall be very glad if they will make this the medium for doing so.

A Hydrocycle worked by three men has recently made a successful trip through the muddy waters of Father Thames. The boat is propelled by working pedals in much the same way as the ordinary road cycle. Sixty miles were covered in ten hours odd, which is a very satisfactory start.

A Shopping Dodge. A NEW inducement to stand at shop windows has been adopted by a Paris tradesman. He has fixed a small pipe along the exterior of the window, from which, through numerous holes, is emitted a gentle current of warm air, slightly scented. He finds the result to be that the more the people sniff the scented air outside the more they admire the goods within.

A New Clothes Line. BY an ingenious arrangement of pulleys working on terminal posts, a clothes line can now be set up so that all the hanging out or taking in of the wash may be done from a fixed standpoint, which can, of course, be under shelter if desired. This device ought to make the lot of the wash-tub operators one of absolute contentment and uninterrupted happiness. But it will probably do nothing of the kind.

A Weed Exterminator. A QUAINT electric apparatus has lately been devised by a Yankee electrician, with designs on the prosperity of the rank vegetation that flourishes along the sides of railway lines, more especially in tropical countries. The dynamo and engine, or batteries, are to be carried upon a locomotive, and an irresistible current, applied by means of a brush, is to wither up the unfruitful vegetation. This invention can also be applied to the extermination of weeds growing upon arable land.

A Cheap Window Awning. A SIMPLE improvement, whereby the everyday window blind can be utilised as an awning, forms the subject of a patent recently taken out by a New Yorker. To the outside of each window-frame are affixed two horizontal posts. By pulling a string a hinged rod or arm is let down from either side at right angles, projecting outwardly, and thus releasing fanwise the "wing" material which had been enclosed between the stretcher rod and the post. The ordinary roller at the lower end of the blind is then easily fixed between the outer ends of the wing arms, and thus the penetrating rays of old Sol are kept at a distance without excluding the fresh air.

A New Buckle. THE very fact that the ordinary buckle—the simple apparatus with which we are so familiar—has held a practical monopoly in its special line for so many years tells what a faithful and trustworthy servant it has been. On its intrinsic merits it has defied every attempt to establish a rival in popular favour, and it is only during the past few weeks that a Canadian gentleman has patented a new variety which has any justifiable claim to supersede the old original pattern. The method of the "Aylsworth" buckle is simply this. A spring-pressed tongue, somewhat after the fashion of the ordinary paper clip, is riveted on to the end of the strap. This is supplied with a pin, or technically, a "tongue." The clip is forced up by the hand until the other end of the strap is in position, and on being released the pin passes through the hole, and is immediately locked in a perforated plate underneath. This arrangement is so secure that it entirely does away with the necessity for a loop to prevent the end of the strap flapping.

An Air-ship like a Fish. PROFESSOR LANGLEY, of America, hopes he has at last found a solution to the intricate problem of aerial navigation. He has a model which works in the most satisfactory way, as if it really meant business. But others have been equally deceptive in days gone by, their business capabilities, as a rule, being confined to accompanying their creators at unheard-of velocities from the top of a church steeple or some convenient mountain to *terra firma*, never to rise again. The new machine is constructed of lightest aluminium, finest steel, and thinnest copper, and after the model of a mackerel. The wings are of choicest silk. The engines are hidden in what corresponds to the head of the fish, and the four boilers are in the middle. Instead of water, a very volatile hydro-carbon is used, the exact nature of which is a secret locked in the inventor's heart. The extreme end of the tail is used for stoving the fuel, a refined gasoline. Before entering the boilers this is volatilised by passing through a heated coil. The upper portion of the machine is encased in a thin shell of asbestos to prevent undue loss of heat through radiation. The precise construction of the screws has not yet been definitely decided upon.

An Adjustable Bit, of American origin, should appeal to those of my readers who are interested in equine matters. The cross-bar has threaded openings at either end, and the cheek pieces have "sleeves" sliding towards or from each other at will. In this manner one bit may serve any sized horse or mule, which is sometimes a great convenience, and the adjustable parts are covered in such a way that they cannot by any chance injure the animal-wearer's mouth, or get clogged with dust or dirt.

A Double-Stringed Violin has been conceived in the mind of a Mr. Bowers, hailing from Portobello, Edinburgh. Instead of four strings he would have eight, and each couple tuned in unison by regulators attached to the tail-piece. The new instrument is fingered and bowed precisely in the usual manner. The effect is as if two violins were playing simultaneously, and owing to the well-known law of sympathy in sound the twin catguts respond to each other's wailings with a "peculiar sweetness that gives additional tone to the instrument." The musical world owes a debt of gratitude to the inventor. But yet for the commonplace mortal one fiddle at a time is sufficient. The invention is confined to the tail-piece (post free, 2s. 2d.) and is protected.

The Search Light to be used at the World's Fair is, POWER says, a great thing. It is perched on the tower of the Transportation building, and is the largest and strongest one in the world. It was made at Nuremberg, Germany. The great magnifying glass, through which the rays are thrown, is four feet in diameter. The direct power of the light is 15,000 candles without any glass. The carbons used in the radiator are twelve inches long and one and a quarter inches in diameter. They are fastened inside the lamp merely with two upright pieces of steel. The lamp itself is operated on a sort of carriage, something after the manner of a Maxim gun. It can be turned in any direction, and can be tilted so that the ray will ascend vertically. When the full power of the light was turned on, the city of Chicago could be viewed distinctly, though the night was anything but clear. Professor Tischendoerfer claims that on a perfectly clear night Michigan City, across the lake, would be perfectly visible. He also claims that on such a night the rays from the lamp could be seen by persons sixty miles away.

If any reader of PEARSON'S WEEKLY *wishes to communicate with an expert regarding an idea for a patent let him write to the Editor of this paper, marking the envelope* PATENT. *The letter will be handed to a gentleman well known in connection with patents, who will put himself in communication with its sender.*

ALL SORTS AND CONDITIONS OF MEN.

BARONESS DE WORMS is President of a Ladie Golf Club.

MR. W. D. HOWELLS, the famous American novelist, began life as a compositor.

MR. EDWARD LLOYD, the great singer, is very fond of fowls, and has won a great many prizes at poultry shows.

MR. GLADSTONE has a liking for white flowers, and he always wears a button-hole of white rosebuds at those weddings which he honours with his presence.

THE Pope is in favour of home education for girls; he has been heard to say that the poorest girl who takes the first step into her teens under the affectionate care of her own mother, is more to be envied than the wealthiest damsel who enters that period of her life in a boarding school.

THE Czar's favourite palace is Tzskosselo, a place so beautiful that a description of it reads like a page of "The Arabian Nights." The building stands in grounds which are eighty miles in circumference. Some of the rooms are wainscoted with lapis lazuli, and the floors are of ebony inlaid with mother of pearl. The corridors are hung with the rarest tapestries and silk curtains, and all the metal work is silver.

MISS JOANNA BAKER, an American girl, is said to be the most learned woman in the world. Her father began teaching her Greek when she was four years of age, and by the time she was eight she could read Zenophon fluently. At fourteen she compiled a lexicon of the Œdipus Tyrannus, and at sixteen she became a college tutor. She is a pleasant, modest-looking young woman, and has nothing about her of the blue stocking.

THE Austrian Archduke, Henry of Hapsburg, is one of the few Royalties in Europe who can honestly say that they have married for love. He wedded, some twenty-five years ago, a famous opera singer, Leopoldine Hofmann, the daughter of a tax collector in Upper Austria. The Emperor was in such a rage when he heard of the marriage, that he had Archduke Henry's allowance stopped from the Imperial Civil List, and removed him from his position of General of a division of the Infantry.

THE Duke of Edinburgh wears a gold bangle fastened with a gold lock on his left wrist.

AN American lady, Miss Zoe Gayton, walked ten thousand miles from Chicago to New York for a wager of £500.

DVORAK, the musical composer, goes to bed every night at half-past eight, and is up in the morning at 4.30; thus his work is over by breakfast, and he has the rest of the day to devote to social and other pursuits.

LOUISE MICHEL, the Socialist, began life as a governess in the family of the Count de Scissons, and her first exploit was to smash the crucifixes belonging to her pupils, the Count's daughters, and to dance round the Count's dining-table denouncing the parish curé, who was sitting at meat with the family.

THE Academy of Science, at Munich, has received its first woman member, the Princess Theresia of Bavaria. Princess Theresia has always a number of pet animals in her train, and she is said to have once arrived in Madrid from South America with a young puma, three monkeys, several parrots, and a couple of snakes among her personal luggage! She is pretty generally disliked by her Royal relations, who regard her as a "crank."

EDWARD BELLAMY did not, like Lord Byron, wake one morning and find himself famous. He worked hard for years with very little recognition, and even after "Looking Backward" was published it was several years before it attracted much attention. Mr. Bellamy is forty-five years old, a lawyer by profession, but devotes more time to literature than to law. He has an office in Springfield, Mass., furnished in the simplest manner, with a table and two or three chairs, and the floor is literally carpeted with manuscripts.

THE Emperor of Germany is one of the most assiduous newspaper readers in the world. Articles of special interest are cut from all the European papers every day by two of the Kaiser's most intelligent secretaries. In order that he may see at a glance what they are all about, a brief typewritten summary of the contents of each article is appended, and the whole is pasted on to strips of pasteboard. If there is anything of very special interest the Emperor marks it with a red pencil, and it is put away for future reference.

MR. HERBERT SPENCER lives quietly among his books in an old-fashioned house in Regent's Park, but dines out often, and occasionally visits a place of amusement. Comic opera is his delight. He finds in it an offset to his lucubrations upon the data of ethics, for he is still a veritable glutton for work. No matter how fine the day he carries an umbrella. He also carries about a couple of little plugs in his pocket, and whenever conversation becomes annoying, he takes them out and puts them in his ears, and thus becomes deaf to the chatter about him.

MISS FLORENCE MARRYAT, the novelist, is a woman of remarkable energy and force of character. She walks with a firm, even mannish, stride, and holds herself with all the conscious dignity of a woman who knows that heaven has bestowed a good figure upon her. Miss Marryat's character is also betrayed in her speech, which has a sharp determined ring about it, the meaning of which cannot be missed. The distinguished authoress is a devout Spiritualist. She holds seances where denizens of the other world appear, and even the harrowing process of materialism takes place.

A SHORT time ago an amusing incident occurred at Freiburg, in Germany. Two ladies were standing in front of a shop window examining the wares, when the owner of the establishment, impatient at their not entering his premises, told them sharply that they had been there long enough, and requested them to move on. Half an hour later a footman in Court livery called and asked the ill-mannered tradesman, on behalf of the Hereditary Grand Duchess of Baden, how much she owed him for looking in at his shop window. The man's feelings can be more easily imagined than described.

EDWARD BURNE JONES, A.R.A., lives a retired hermit's life. In appearance he is a most noticeable man. He is thin and delicate-looking—the result of much patient labour and serious thought. His head is finely cut, and his face, with its long patriarchal beard and the great dreaming eyes, is that of your idealist. Nervous energy, and as great sensitiveness and delicacy of character, are expressed in Mr. Burne-Jones's face, and in the thin, eager hands. He has introduced into this country a welcome feature, which one meets with frequently on the Continent. His studio is open to all, be they students or picture-lovers, or simply passers-by.

THREE MORE INSURANCE CLAIMS PAID.

(TOTAL EIGHTY-TWO.)

MR. JOHN MACHIN, 71, Hanover Street, Belfast. Football, March 19th. Leg broken.

MR. D. HISCOX, Silver Street, Honiton. Football, April 1st. Leg broken.

MR. JOSEPH PEVEY, New Delaval, near Newcastle. Football, Leg broken.

Having had a signed coupon at the time of accident, the Ocean Company have forwarded each a cheque for £6.

Spring cleaners will be glad to know that hay sprinkled with chloride of lime and left in a newly-painted room will take away the smell.

WORKERS AND THEIR WORK—No. LXXXIII.

THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA.

ALTHOUGH now in his sixty-third year, the Emperor of Austria is still vigorous and alert. He is a tall and handsome man, and possesses all the amiable and chivalrous qualities. At the battle of Solferino he gave proof of a personal bravery which is very rare among modern kings, and which, in his case, amounted almost to rashness.

No sovereign of his House has ever been so universally popular or aroused such a high pitch of personal devotion among his subjects as he, unless it be the great Empress Maria Theresa, when the chivalry of the Empire arose as one man to defend her against the encroachments of Prussia. Perhaps the enthusiasm in his favour rose to its highest pitch after the attempt to murder him when he was on his way to bring a message of conciliation to his Bohemian subjects.

He probably realises in his person better than any other Sovereign the old tradition of a king being the father of his subjects. He takes a quite paternal interest in the welfare of the various nationalities committed to his charge, and, by untiring application and a conscientious devotion to duty, has been able to accomplish very much on their behalf.

Nothing could exceed his kindliness of heart. He cannot entirely divest himself of tender feelings for even the worst of mankind, and his rooted objection to signing death warrants has often secured for criminals the commutation of their sentences. He said once to Count Andrassy: "I am thankful that those who have been condemned to death for treason have not all been executed, for I afterwards was able to make them my Prime Ministers." This tenderness of disposition is probably due in great part to the many sorrows and disappointments which have embittered his own life.

He has said that he will probably be known in history as "Francis Joseph the Unlucky," and the shadow of his misfortunes has already stamped itself indelibly upon his countenance and character. Alike in his public and private life, disappointments, blighted ambitions, hopes deferred, and tragical misfortunes seem to have dogged his footsteps, and it is no wonder that, now he is emerging from middle age, he should acquire a look of hopeless gloom.

Politically, the Emperor is probably the most important person in Europe. He is not one of those who reign but do not govern, and his every action has a direct bearing upon the fortunes of the civilised world. Without his vigilance, his caution, and his wisdom, the Austrian dominions, containing as they do so many elements of disruption, must have gone to pieces long ago, and to his personal influence must be attributed the beneficent development of the prosperity and the national institutions of his subjects.

He was brought up in the residence which his grandfather, Francis I., had built on the model of a baronial castle of the Middle Ages, and he was always made a great pet of. His grandfather used to let him play for hours in his study and would often interrupt his affairs of State in order to indulge in a romp with the boy. One day they were out for a walk together and saw a sentry. Suddenly the little Prince asked:

"Is it not true, grandpapa, that this sentry is very poor?"

"Why do you think that, my child?"

"Because he has to go on duty."

"My child," replied the Emperor, "everyone, rich or poor, has to go on his duty. Princes, too, must take their turn. But this man is poor. You may run and give him this bank-note if you like."

The Prince at once ran to the sentry and said:

"Here, poor man, grandfather sends you this."

The orders to sentries are stringent, so the soldier shook his head to show that he could not take it, and the little Prince ran back to his grandfather greatly disappointed. The old Emperor greatly enjoyed the scene and presently exclaimed: "I see a way out of it. Go and put it in his cartouch box."

This he attempted to do on tip-toe, but alas, it was too high, and the old Emperor had to lift him up and, with the help of the Empress, they managed to put the bank-note into the box.

"Now the soldier will be no longer poor, grandpapa," said the little Prince as they moved away.

At a very early age Francis Joseph was taught a great number of languages, and could speak and read fluently the eight languages of the Empire besides French and English.

This stood him in good stead later on, and was probably one of the things which paved his way to the throne.

In 1847 the Archduke Francis Joseph was sent as the Emperor's deputy to Buda-Pesth on a public occasion. The Hungarian movement was then in its fever height of excitement, and the people laid the greatest stress, as they do now, upon everybody making use of the Hungarian language. No Archduke hitherto had taken the trouble to learn it, for it is one of the most difficult languages in Europe, resembling no other, except Finnish.

When Francis Joseph got up at the ceremony to make a speech, he was received with the chilly distrust, which the Hungarians then took pride in displaying towards their over-lords. But what was their astonishment, what their joy, when the young Archduke began to address them in the purest Magyar. They sprang from their seats, they shouted "Eljen" (long may he live) till they were hoarse, they drew their swords and waved them aloft with enthusiasm, after the traditional Hungarian fashion.

When, a year later, Hungary was in full revolt against the Hapsburgs, the rebel leader Kossuth proposed that the young Archduke Francis Joseph, who had delighted the hearts of the Hungarians with his Hungarian speech, should be elected King of Hungary. And, no doubt, it was partly in consequence of the popularity he had gained in this way that, when the Emperor Ferdinand abdicated, the Imperial Crown was conferred upon his nephew Francis Joseph.

He came to the throne at the age of eighteen, in very troublous times. It was just after the "year of Revolutions" (1848), when the revolutionary spirit had swept all over Europe like a great tidal wave, and unsettled every institution. His uncle had been forced to abdicate, and the Empire was shaken with internal dissensions. For a time it seemed necessary to bow to the Spirit of the Age.

But before long he found that his only course was to dissolve the newly-formed National Assembly, and assume absolute power. It was touch and go then, and the Empire was only saved by the genius of Radetsky and the loyalty of the Slav population. From those days to these it has been a long uphill struggle to hold his own, and many a time he has seemed to be on the very brink of disaster. Looking back on it all, however, he has not much to complain of. And the best proof of his success is the general devotion of his subjects towards him.

This devotion might appear to many somewhat of a paradox. He has never won a victory in war, he has all his life been in conflict with popular ideas and popular movements, he has had to appeal to foreign arms in order to recover one half of his revolted provinces.

Since then he has lost two large slices of his dominions. All the bitterest of national jealousies, racial antipathies, and feverish revolutionary aspirations of the day are at work in the Empire. He has never been assisted by a really great general or statesman since Metternich, who brought him up in statecraft, and Radetsky, who secured him on the throne. And yet he contrives to hold the balance between all the conflicting elements, and has got to be looked upon as a trusty arbiter among his subjects.

The Emperor has also shown himself zealous for the development of the trade of his country, quite as much as for the development of its national prestige.

The character of the Emperor was summed up more than forty years ago by Prince Bismarck in the following words: "He is quick of apprehension and has a safe circumspect manner of judging with simplicity, and an openness of demeanour that begets confidence," and the words are as true to-day as they were then. If the Emperor's life had to be acted over again, there is probably little in it that he would find necessary to alter, or wiser to attempt in a different way.

And yet his life has been attended by many disasters. The defeat by Prussia was one which might have been looked upon as an overwhelming calamity by a less buoyant character. But in next to no time the Emperor seemed to come up smiling, rather invigorated and encouraged by his disaster than otherwise. Probably the greatest and saddest shadow that came over his life was that of the tragic death of his only son, Crown Prince Rudolph, and he has scarcely yet recovered from the blow which the news of it occasioned him.

The Emperor is an extraordinarily hard worker. Winter and summer he rises at five o'clock in the morning and devotes almost his whole day, until he goes to bed again at ten p.m., to the affairs of State, writing, receiving audiences, attending reviews, conferring with his Ministers, and deciding upon policies of all the great departments of State.

When the Emperor Ferdinand abdicated, he said: "Austria needs a young, robust monarch," and, indeed, without the physical strength and powers of endurance which Francis Joseph possesses, it would have been scarcely possible for him to accomplish all he has done.

He discusses every document with his Ministers before signing it, but always without animation. He reads a few newspapers and runs through a summary of the opinions of the Press specially compiled for him, which keeps him more or less in touch with public opinion.

He takes his breakfast hurriedly at a corner of his desk, and is always very abstemious both in the matter of food and drink. A short walk, a rapid ride, or a visit to the theatre are his only recreations, excepting when he allows himself a short holiday.

He has a wonderful memory, especially for faces, and is said to have a keen insight into character. Oddly enough, though one of the most tender-hearted men alive, he has never been carried away by emotion either as a young man or as an old one, and he possesses the rare gift of knowing how to wait, and to wait moreover with calmness and dignity.

Both he and his wife are devoted to sport, and if the cares of State did not weigh so heavily upon him, he would probably pursue it with as great a zeal and zest as she does. Her prowess in the hunting-field in England and Ireland has long been famous, and if he had his own way, which Emperors, alas! cannot often have, he would constantly accompany her to hounds, and join her in her yachting trips. The latter he has often done when in need of a well-earned rest.

They have always been very good friends, and her good spirits and happy temperament have done much to comfort and assist him in the struggles of life.

People who saw them travelling about in Switzerland together the other day were of opinion that they looked more like a happy pair on their honeymoon than a married couple of thirty-nine years' standing.

The method of his engagement to the present Empress had a certain amount of romance about it. In 1853 he gave a ball at Ischl to celebrate his birthday, and among the guests was the Duchess Louise of Bavaria, with her two eldest daughters Helene and Elizabeth, who were all of course invited.

The Duchess was, however, disinclined to bring the Princess Elizabeth on the plea that she was not yet out, and had not got a dress in which to appear. But the Emperor would take no excuse and said, in his simple good-natured way, that the simplest of dresses and a rose in her hair would suffice to make his pretty cousin Queen of the Feast.

Then the mother gave way and the pretty cousin became not only Queen of the Feast but Queen of Francis Joseph's heart and future Empress of Austria. He danced exclusively with her all the evening, which naturally aroused a good deal of attention. During the evening he took her to a table on which lay a huge album containing pictures of the various national costumes of the Eighteen States of Austria. The Emperor turned over the pages and then said gently: "They are my subjects, say one word and you also shall reign over them." The Princess, who had already known the Emperor from childhood, instead of making an answer simply placed her hand in his. Next day the whole Imperial family assembled in the little parish church of Ischl, and the betrothal of the Emperor of Austria with the Princess Elizabeth of Bavaria was celebrated with all due solemnity.

The Emperor of Austria is essentially the representative of the old state of things in Europe. His Court is the strictest in the matter of etiquette, and he does all he can to limit the higher branches of the Army and the public service to men of high lineage and high character. Without making so much noise about it, his views about absolute monarchy are as uncompromising as those of the young German Emperor.

It is only by his strength of character and diplomatic skill that he has been able to maintain these principles successfully in his difficult position and in face of his countless obstacles. If his successor intends to continue in the same groove he will have a difficult task before him, inheriting as he will the difficulties, without the popularity and experience that have served to overcome them.

This Insurance holds good for any number of claims to the extent of £1,000—not for one only.

ONE THOUSAND POUNDS PAID.

£1,000 COUPON TICKET. specially guaranteed by the

OCEAN ACCIDENT AND GUARANTEE CORPORATION, LIMITED,

40, 42, and 44, MOORGATE STREET, LONDON, E.C.

(*To whom Notice of Claims, under the following conditions, must be sent within seven days to the above address.*)

INSURANCE TICKET. *Applicable to passenge trains in Great Britain and Ireland.*

Issued under Section 33 of the "Ocean Accident and Guarantee Company, Limited, Act," 1890.

ONE THOUSAND POUNDS

will be paid by the above Corporation to the legal representative of any person killed by an accident to the train in which the deceased was an ordinary ticket-bearing passenger (including holders of season and excursion tickets), and who, at the time of such accident, had upon his person this coupon ticket or the paper in which it is, with his, or her, usual signature, written in ink or pencil on the space provided below, which is the essence of this contract.

PROVIDED ALSO, that the said sum will be paid to the legal representatives of such person injured should death result from such accident within three calendar months thereafter.

This Insurance holds good for the current week of issue only, and entitles the holder to the benefit of, and is subject to, the conditions of the "Ocean Accident and Guarantee Company, Limited, Act," 1890, Risks No. 2 & 3.

The purchase of this publication is admitted to be the payment of a Premium under Sec. 34 of the Act. A Print of the Act can be seen at the office of this Journal, or of the said Corporation. No person can recover on more than one Coupon Ticket in respect of the same risk.

Signature.....

Available from the morning of April 22nd, 1893, until Midnight, April 29th, 1893. (*See column 3, page 651.*)

When John Chinaman falls in love he sends a pair of geese to the lady of his affections. They are emblems of conjugal fidelity.

THE AGE OF THE ALPHABET.

The source of the English alphabet may be found in the writing of a people who lived in the hills of Northern India some three thousand years ago. As time went on these people were scattered from their native abodes, and many of them took up their residence in Syria, the people of which country adopted their method of writing.

A thousand years later the merchants of Phœnicia extended their business operations to every part of the then civilised world, but, finding that trade could not be carried on to any very great extent without a method of communication, they searched for some suitable characters for writing, and those used by the Syrians being the best obtainable were adopted.

The Phœnicians carried their newly-found alphabet to the Greeks, from whom it was adopted by the Romans. We now use the Roman alphabet with slight modifications. In passing through the hands of so many nations the alphabet had undergone a great change.

When it left the Indian mountains each letter represented a syllable, or even an idea, but when it appeared in England each letter was only part of a syllable, and that only part of an idea.

THE FAVOURITE SPORT OF JAPAN.

They appear to have a regular wrestling week there, just as we have Cowes yachting week and a Canterbury cricket week. The Mikado and all the Japanese aristocracy are patrons of the sport, which is carried on in a very curious manner.

The preliminary courtesies of the wrestlers must be funnier than their tussels. Slowly and majestically two mountains of flesh rise and mount the earthern dais. Each has a corner as in a boxing match, and to this each goes slowly. Here a curious pantomime is performed by both.

First the right leg is raised high in air and brought down some little way apart from the other, with considerable force to the ground, and at the same time the right hand smites his thigh, which it presses, sliding along to the knee. The body is brought down to a half-sitting position.

This same operation is carried out with the left leg with the view of stretching the muscles before grappling. After this is over, his servant hands him a saucer full of water, with which he fills his mouth, and then squirts it, like a Chinese launderyman, in fine sprays over his chest and arms; then rubs himself down with paper, which serves as a towel in Japan.

This done, he takes a pinch of salt and sprinkles it before him for luck, and goes to his own side of the ring and sits on his "hunkers" on the grass edging facing his opponent, who has gone through precisely the same office.

After this performance, and a little more manœuvring, the two men enter the ring, bending down facing each other with the half-closed right hand touching the ground, and so they look into each other's eyes watching their opportunity. First one and then the other makes feints at grappling with lightning speed, coming back to the first position.

Should a grip be made which is not according to rule, the umpire stops them, and then each goes to his corner and goes through the pantomime described above of squirting water over himself, etc.

At last they close with each other, and each has a firm grip of the silk waistband with one hand, and a grip of the arm at the biceps with the other, keeping the trunk as far as possible out of reach.

Each makes convulsive snatches to gain a better hold. When they have fairly clutched each other they have a regular set-to struggle amid the applause of the spectators. This sort of thing goes on every day from early dawn to sunset for the week, and there are two weeks every year devoted to the fun. The good wrestlers are courted by the Japanese aristocracy, and everywhere entertained.

Cyclists must have their lamps alight at 8.5 p.m. on Saturday, April 22nd, and two minutes later on every succeeding evening until April 29th.

£100 INSURANCE FOR CYCLISTS.

In addition to our unique Railway Insurance offer of £1,000, we insure Cyclists, in the event of death from Cycling Accidents, to the extent of £100. The only condition required to secure this sum to whomsoever the Proprietors of PEARSON'S WEEKLY *may decide to be the Next-of-kin of any Cyclist who meets with his or her death by an accident while actually riding, is that a copy of the current number of* PEARSON'S WEEKLY, *or this notice, should be on the person of the deceased at the time of the fatality. The usual signature in pen or pencil must occupy the line left blank at the foot of this notice. Notice of accident must be given within seven days to the Proprietors of the Paper, and death must occur within the same period from the accident.*

Signature _____

Available until midnight, April 29th, 1893.

HOW BRITISH TITLES ARE PURCHASED.

In looking through the columns of The London Gazette it is difficult to understand in many cases why on earth such and such an individual has been made a knight, a baronet, or a peer, as the case may be. He is an absolutely unknown person, famed neither for statesmanship nor anything of that sort; and yet his name sounds well, and he has the appearance of a great man in print, and you would give worlds to know the reason why he became Sir Something This or Lord Somebody That.

Prompted by this feeling of curiosity, not unmingled with a spice of cynicism, someone suggested a short while back that whenever an announcement of the kind was made, it should be accompanied by an explanation as to why the title was conferred upon a comparatively unknown person.

Now, this proposition was a very good one in its way, but the leading spirits on both sides of the House of Commons viewed it in alarm, and quashed it from the first. Why? Simply because the motives for bestowing honours of the kind upon certain persons were not of a nature that would bear inspection under the cold, merciless light of public opinion.

Without exactly accusing the English nobility of corrupt practices, at least in this respect, I can safely say that a man with the necessary amount of cash can purchase a title just in the same way as he would buy a mansion or an estate.

It is scarcely necessary to say that a knighthood is the lowest form of dignity. Of late years it has become quite common; in fact, more than that. In many instances it has been looked upon with suspicion, as when it appears upon the prospectus of a limited liability company, or in the circular of a literary society.

Therefore, men with means don't try very hard to get knighted, unless it is to act as a stepping-stone to a baronetcy.

A peerage or a baronetcy is something worth working for. The right to sit in the House of Lords accompanies the one, and although the other does not carry this privilege with it, the title is greatly coveted by men who have grown rich in trade, and who seek to lay the foundation of an aristocratic family by means of such an hereditary honour.

It is not always necessary to sit in the House of Commons before attaining the dignity of baronet or peer, but the position adds greatly to the likelihood of success, especially if the aspirant makes it a rule to vote the right way, and not to talk too much.

He awaits his opportunity, keeping well in favour with the leaders of his party, and if he does the correct thing, time will bring its reward. By the correct thing, I mean that his cheque-book must always be open for the furtherance of the interests of his party. A man may sit from youth to old age in the House and fail to secure a title if he lacks a plenitude of worldly goods. That is the shame of it.

Look at the number of great financiers and brewers in the House of Lords to-day. How many are politicians, and how many would be sitting there now had it not been for the colossal wealth which they were able and willing to spend for the benefit of their respective parties?

The way in which they dispose of their surplus cash is this. In London there are what are known as Central Funds. These funds are drawn upon at election times by candidates who are unable to raise the necessary £600 to £1,000 required to carry through the contest, and are used for other party purposes. They are replenished as soon as they run short by wealthy personages whose object it is to eventually sit in the House of Lords. Needless to say, should the party they are backing get into power their ideal is likely to become a glorious reality in double-quick time.

Another road to the same goal lies in a more independent if somewhat longer direction. A man goes down before an election into the provinces, selects a place that is in want of a partisan journal, and finances a paper there. Or maybe he will heavily subsidise a periodical already in existence that for some reason has not a paying constituency.

Perhaps, in the course of time, he will find a banquet necessary to promote his ends, and to this he will invite the local candidate to Parliament, who speaks at the dinner, pointing out forcibly the disinterested public spiritedness of the newspaper proprietor and the benefits he is conferring on the neighbourhood.

In this fashion he works his way to social distinction, for in nine cases out of ten if the politician's party gets into power that individual will not overlook the fact that but for his wealthy friend he would have had no paper to advocate his claims in his own constituency; and so he uses his influence until his friend's name appears in The London Gazette.

But this sort of thing costs money. Such a method of winning a title runs to between £20,000 and £100,000, for there is absolutely no easier way of throwing away gold than by starting a newspaper.

Of course, when once the title has been conferred, the recipient often drops his newspaper. Public spiritedness cannot be expected to go too far.

I don't think I am far wrong in saying that half a dozen fairly prominent provincial daily papers now dragging out an existence are being used simply for such an end.

ICONS.

Russia is about the only country in which icons are manufactured on anything like a large scale.

An icon is the picture of a saint, the face of which is painted, with the body carved in gold, silver, or bronze.

Everybody in Russia has an icon. You cannot enter a house where one of these semi-statues is not suspended on the wall. In all the shops they are to be found, and customers make a point of baring their heads and crossing themselves before it previous to making a purchase.

They stare at you from the walls of the public buildings, from the breasts of pious citizens, from the interior of public vehicles, and haunt you even at the railway stations.

The prices vary with the size of the icon. Small ones no bigger than a visiting-card can be obtained for a sum equal to a halfpenny, and ones that cover the side of a room run into thousands of pounds.

Large establishments at Moscow and St. Petersburg derive the whole of their profits from the exclusive sale of icons. As a rule they are made at the homes of the workpeople, a capable man producing on an average three single-figure pictures a week.

THE DEAD HORSE FESTIVAL.

This amusing ceremony often takes place on board English ships sailing to Australia. On joining a ship the sailors are advanced a month's wages, with which they are supposed to have bought a horse, which dies at the end of four weeks.

A dummy steed is prepared in the forecastle, the body being an old flour barrel, the neck and head of canvas, stuffed with straw and painted. In place of a saddle, a hole is cut through the body large enough to admit the legs of the rider.

About half-past seven in the evening a small procession, headed by a man who carries a *bâton*, furnished with a rude imitation of a human face, issues from the forecastle. Following him is a sailor with long white whiskers, who holds a can for penny contributions.

He is protected by a number of policemen, armed with canvas clubs like those used in pantomimes, with which they lay about them freely, but with no other effect than eliciting shouts of laughter. The procession is closed by a number of sailors, who sing jolly sea-songs during the march. After the collection has been made the party returns to the forecastle.

Shortly afterward a larger procession issues from the forecastle, with a number of comic characters in addition to those mentioned, among them the auctioneer in frock-coat and tall hat, with a roll of papers in his hands, and attended by a clerk. Immediately after the auctioneer comes the horse, ridden, or rather carried, by a sailor dressed as a jockey, and led by a groom. The procession parades about the deck, the rider making the horse prance in the most lively manner.

The auctioneer then mounts a barrel on the quarter-deck, and after a long and laughable harangue on the merits of the horse puts up the animal for sale. Previous to all this the hat has been passed round among the passengers and officers, and ten to fifteen pounds have been collected for the benefit of the sailors. The bidding is spirited and amusing, and ceases when it reaches the amount collected, which is then handed to the sailors by one of the lady passengers.

After the auction the leading characters move off to the lee side, near the mainsail, and a solemn dirge is chanted, about the poor animal dying suddenly, each verse ending with "Poor old horse!"

The horse and rider are then hoisted to the end of the mainyard over the ship's side; blue lights are let off, giving a ghastly aspect to the scene, and at a signal the rope is cut and the horse falls into the sea, leaving the rider suspended, and floats astern in the darkness. The procession again forms and marches around the deck, the sailors singing "Rule Britannia."

Teacher: "Do you know what ret-ri-bu-tion means?"

Boy: "Yes'm. We had that word last week."

Teacher: "You have a good memory. Now stand up and give a definition."

Boy: "Why, if you play in th' dirt, your mamma fills your ears, an' nose, an' eyes full of soap."

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

THE ANGEL OF THE REVOLUTION.

A TALE OF THE COMING TERROR.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A BLOODLESS VICTORY.

When they reached the *Ariel's* bows the first of the two steamers was only a couple of miles or so ahead. Arnold at once ordered the fan-wheels aloft, and allowed the air-ship to sink within fifty feet of the water so as to speak the *Avondale*, should it turn out to be her. At the same time a plain blood-red flag was run up to a flagstaff at the stern of the *Ariel*, and this was almost immediately answered by a similar one from the steamer's peak, which proved her to be the vessel expected.

At the speed the air-ship and the steamer were travelling a few minutes sufficed to bring them together. As soon as they were within hailing distance those on board the *Ariel* recognised Nicholas Roburoff and his wife, Radna Michaelis, and several other members of the Circle standing together on the bridge of the steamer. Handkerchiefs were waved, and cries of greeting and welcome passed and repassed from the air to the sea until Arnold raised his hand for silence, and, hailing Roburoff, said:

"Are you all well on board?"

"Yes, all well, though that Frenchman has fired twice at us because we wouldn't heave to for examination. But we were going too fast for him, and so he never got the range."

"Oh, a Frenchman is he? What's he chasing you for? Is war declared?"

"Yes, it was declared ten days ago, that is why we are before our time. We have had to run the blockade out of the Bay of Biscay. That French gunboat sighted us off the Canaries, and has chased us ever since. It's a good thing you came out to meet us, for she would have overhauled us by nightfall, though we have made nearly twenty knots an hour since the chase began. Can you come nearer; we have letters for you from the Chief?"

"Certainly," replied Arnold. "I'll come alongside. You go ahead full speed. I'll do the rest."

So saying he went into the wheel-house, ran the *Ariel* past the *Avondale*, swung her round, and overtook the steamer again as easily as though she had only been travelling a couple of miles an hour instead of over twenty, and ran her bow so close up under the steamer's quarter that it was quite easy to get from one vessel to the other.

He then gave the wheel to his coxswain, Andrew Smith, telling him to keep the *Ariel* as she was, and went forward and shook hands with Roburoff, taking the packet of letters from him at the same time.

Colston had grasped the situation at a glance, swung himself on board the steamer, and was already engaged in an animated conversation with Radna. As soon as Arnold saw what had happened he called out in an authoritative voice that no one had heard him use before:

"Lieutenant Colston, you have deserted your ship on the eve of an engagement. You know the penalty, I suppose?"

For the moment everyone thought he was really in earnest, and that some grave breach of discipline had been committed, but Natasha detected a twinkle in his eye, and touching him lightly on the arm, said:

"Don't you think you could forgive him this time, Captain Arnold, if he brought with him a hostage for his future good behaviour? Besides, I do so want to have Radna on board the *Ariel* for a bit."

"That's a very happy thought of yours," replied Arnold, now laughing outright himself at the sudden hush that his words had created. "He shall bring her on board at once. I don't think he'll desert again with her here. I daresay they have a lot to say to each other."

A couple of minutes later Radna had been lifted over the rails of the two vessels, and was clasped in Natasha's arms. Arnold then gave the order to cast off the rope that had been passed from the steamer, and, bidding her captain hold on his way at full speed, told Roburoff not to trouble himself any more about the Frenchman, and rose rapidly into the air before the wondering eyes of the rest of the *Avondale's* crew and company.

By the time the *Ariel* had risen a thousand feet above the sea in the direction of the French gunboat, the latter was only about five miles distant. Through the glasses they could see that their appearance had created no little excitement on board her. They saw a group of officers eagerly scanning the air-ship with field-glasses and telescopes. The distance between the two vessels rapidly decreased, and when they were less than a couple of miles apart Arnold took his glasses from his eyes and said rather sharply:

"Get under cover everybody! He's loading one of his guns, and means to try a shell on us. Here, Meyer, Petrovitch, load these two guns with No. 1 shell."

While he was speaking the three ladies had retired into the deck saloon, whence they could see everything that went on, and where they would be to a certain extent protected by the metal walls and the almost unbreakable toughened glass of the windows, in the very unlikely event of the Frenchman's shell bursting near enough to do any harm.

The "No. 1" shells which Arnold had ordered to be put into the guns were the smallest of three sizes used. Their spiral flanges fitted the grooves of the guns just as those of the larger ones did, and a plate which folded automatically as the projectile left the muzzle, preserved the full impact of the compressed air. They contained a much less bursting charge than the terrible missiles which had been used to destroy Kronstadt, but they were still far more powerful than anything that the gunboat had on board.

"I don't want to sink him," said Arnold to Colston, who was standing beside him as he sighted the gun, "so I'll only frighten him a bit with this one."

As he spoke he touched the spring and released the projectile. It struck the almost waveless sea about forty yards in front of the gunboat's bows, and the next instant a huge mass of white foaming water rose fifty feet into the air. Before the gunboat could be stopped she had plunged fairly into it, and it burst like a liquid avalanche on her decks, making a clean sweep of them from stem to stern, and pouring in torrents down into her cabins and stokeholes. Such a novel assault as this was totally unlooked for, and so all her hatches and companion ways, which had been opened on account of the heat, had been left open, and thus afforded a free ingress to the water.

Her shell was never fired, for the deluge swept away the man stationed at the gun, and hurled him bruised and senseless to the deck. A few minutes later the dense volumes of smoke that had been pouring out of her funnel began to get less and less, and her speed perceptibly slackening the while.

"Capital!" exclaimed Colston, as he saw the effect of the shot. "You've put his fires out, or, at any rate, damped them very considerably for him, and given all hands a bath gratis. What are you going to do now?"

"Show a flag of truce," replied Arnold, "and speak him as kindly as may be. We may be able to get some news out of him."

"Do you think he is to be trusted? He'll be pretty angry after that ignominious shower-bath you have just treated him to."

"The gunboat is probably commanded by gentlemen who will respect the flag of truce if they acknowledge it. If they don't I shall blow them out of the water by way of teaching them better manners."

So saying, Arnold went aft and had a white flag hoisted in place of the red one, at the same time beckoning to the ladies to come out on deck again. As soon as the white flag was seen from the gunboat a similar one was hoisted at her masthead, and then the *Ariel* sank gently down towards her until she hung fifty feet above the water within easy hailing distance.

Then the following colloquy was carried on in French between Colston, whom Arnold had deputed for the task, and the captain of the gunboat, who with the rest of his officers looked as though they were trying bravely to keep up their dignity under very untoward circumstances. As they were everyone of them drenched to the skin, their light tropical uniforms hung about them like so many wet rags.

"Good morning, gentlemen! May I ask what gunboat that is, and why you were pursuing that innocent unarmed steamer yonder?"

It will be observed that Colston was quite a novice in sea-talk, and hailed the gunboat much as he would have greeted a friend in the street. The French captain, a tall gentlemanly-looking man, in spite of his drenched uniform, stared for a moment in speechless astonishment at Colston and the strange craft on which he stood.

In all his sea-life he had never heard such a hail from a hostile vessel, or, indeed, from any traveller of the seas. But to be greeted in the language of the boulevards from the deck of a ship the like of which he had never seen before, and which by some mysterious means had overwhelmed his vessel with watery confusion before he had had time to fire a shot—it was something monstrous, unheard of, and quite outside all the rules of warfare.

Suddenly, too, he became aware that there were ladies on board of this unearthly craft which floated in the air as easily as his own ship did in the water, and this increased his perplexity a hundred fold. Then his native politeness came to his rescue. He doffed his cap as well as the limp condition of it would permit him to do, and said with a bow:

"Monsieur, this is the French gunboat *La Perouse*. We chased the steamer because she refused to show her colours, or to heave to when ordered to do so. In doing that we only acted in accordance with the usages of war."

"And may I ask with whom France is at war?"

"Ah! you do not know! Then you must have been in distant lands, for all Europe is at war. But if you know nothing of the war, may I ask why you should have stopped my pursuit of the steamer, and half extinguished my fires with that mysterious projectile of yours?"

"Because we have an interest in that steamer, and because we saw you putting a shell into one of your guns to fire at us. We are sorry to have put you to such inconvenience, as we have no quarrel with France in particular; but you must remember that we could just as easily have sunk you with that same projectile."

"If you could have hit us at that distance," replied the Frenchman, with a half apologetic shrug of the shoulders.

"With our guns aim is a matter of mathematical certainty, a matter merely of distances and angles. I suppose you have heard of the destruction of Kronstadt, have you not?"

"Alas, who has not! And that is the same mysterious vessel which wrought that terrible destruction in so short a time?"

"The same! Had Kronstadt been a French fortress we should not have destroyed it, but Russia is the enemy of mankind, and so we had no scruples."

"But monsieur will permit me to add that Russia is at present our very good ally, and that Russia and France are now preparing for the conquest of Europe. The Double Alliance has declared war upon the Triple Alliance, and the bugle is sounding from one end of Europe to the other. If you are the enemies of Russia you are the enemies of France, and therefore of myself and those under my command."

"Only in the conventional sense, and not even in that. Granted we are your enemies, we are also and equally the enemies of the Triple Alliance, and we wish neither of you any more harm for the present than you are capable of doing each other. This vessel belongs to the Terrorists, of whom you have doubtless heard, and for the time being we propose to let you fight your battles out among yourselves.

"At the proper moment we shall intervene, if we think fit to do so. If you choose to take us for an enemy now, you have only to say so; and the moment the flags of truce are hauled down, a touch of my finger on a button in the breech of this gun will shatter your ship to fragments, while you have not a gun to train upon us. I think we had better be friends for the present."

The captain of the gunboat had a far too lively recollection of the effects of the one shot he had already received from the *Ariel* to care to risk another at such close quarters. He was a brave man, but he was not a fool, and he had no more idea of pitting his little gunboat, with her furnaces half extinguished, against the mysterious vessel, which with four shots had wrecked the strongest fortress in Europe, than he had of bombarding the moon with his quick-firing guns. Like a wise man he recognised the odds against him to be overwhelming, and so with another eloquent gesture he replied:

"Under the circumstances I think with you, monsieur, that it will be best, at any rate from our point of view, to continue the truce."

"I quite agree with you," replied Colston, somewhat drily. "We wish you no harm individually, and personally we regret the inconvenience to which you have been put. When you return to France we hope you will tell of what you have seen and—"

"Give him this," interupted Arnold, putting a small packet into Colston's hand, "and ask him to forward it to his Majesty the Czar with my compliments. It is the breast-pin that he gave me in the Gatschina Park, and there is a note with it which may interest him a little."

Colston tossed the packet on to the deck of the gunboat and repeated Arnold's message. The French captain picked it up, assuring him that it should reach its august destination in due course. The politest of adieux were exchanged on both sides, and then Arnold sent everyone into the deck saloon, went into the wheel-house and signalled "full speed ahead." A moment later the *Ariel* described a sharp curve round the gunboat, darted forwards and upwards, and in ten minutes had passed out of sight of her astounded and disgusted captain and crew.

CHAPTER XXX.

A NAVY OF THE FUTURE.

As soon as the *Ariel* overtook the steamer Arnold slowed down and piloted her to the island, sailing quietly alongside her through the air as she ploughed her way through the water.

The first advantage that he took of the leisure that was now at his disposal was to read the letter directed to himself that was among those for Natasha, the Princess, and Colston, which had been brought out by the *Avondale*. He recognised the writing as Tremayne's, and when he opened the envelope he found that it contained a somewhat lengthy letter from him and an enclosure in an unfamiliar hand, which consisted of only a few lines, and was signed "Natas."

He started as his eye fell on the terrible name which now meant so much to him, and he naturally read the note to which it was appended first. There was neither date nor formal address, and it ran as follows:—

> You have done well, and fulfilled your promises as a true man should. For the personal service that you have rendered to me I will not thank you in words, for the time may come when I shall be able to do so in deeds. What you have done for the Cause was your duty, and for that I know that you desire no thanks. You have proved that you hold in your hands such power as no single man ever wielded before. Use it well, and in the ages to come men shall remember your name with blessings, and you, if the Master of Destiny permits, shall attain to your heart's desire. NATAS.

Arnold laid the little slip of paper down almost reverently, for, few as the words were, they were those of a man who was not only Natas, the Master of the Terror, but also the father of the woman whose love, in spite of his oath, was the object to the attainment of which he held all things else as secondary, and who therefore had the power to crown his life-work with the supreme blessing without which it would be worthless, however glorious, for he knew full well that, though he might win Natasha's heart, she herself could never be his unless Natas gave her to him.

The letter from Tremayne was dated ten days previously, and ran thus:

> My Dear Arnold,—There is no need for me to try and describe the pleasure with which I have heard of the complete success of your wonderful air-ship, and the brilliant achievements you have already accomplished with her. I will therefore get to business and leave congratulations until we meet again, which I do not think will be very long now. I do not know exactly when this will reach you, and therefore when it does some of my news may be stale. Still I had better begin at the beginning.
>
> The world-war which everyone has been anticipating for so many years is now practically an accomplished fact. Mr. Balfour demanded unconditional apology for the affair in the Sir Ulang Pass, the payment of an indemnity, and an immediate withdrawal of all Russian troops from the Indo-Asiatic frontier. To this Russia replied, not only with a flat refusal, but also with a demand for the evacuation of the whole Afghan frontier by the British troops, and in the alternative threatened war. This, of course, was equivalent to a declaration of war, and as such it was accepted.
>
> Last night Balfour went down to the House, read the Russian note and his own reply to it, and then made a magnificent speech appealing for the support of all parties in the task which lay before him. He clinched this appeal by disclosing the terms of the Franco-Russian secret treaty which, as you know, I put into his hands, and then the excitement was absolutely indescribable.
>
> The upshot was that the House resolved by a somewhat narrow majority to support the Government in maintaining the position taken up, and to make every preparation for war that has not already been made. Britain, I need hardly tell you, has a secret treaty with the Triple Alliance, and therefore the net result of my putting the Franco-Russian treaty before Mr. Balfour will be a practically general declaration of war. The weak point in what may now be called the Quadruple Alliance is Italy.
>
> She is splendidly armed, especially by sea, but she is squeezed dry as regards finance. The House of Commons last night voted a Government guarantee for an Italian loan of twenty millions, but the Lords may possibly throw it out to-night. I shall myself speak strongly in favour of it; for without it Italy cannot possibly keep the field, as neither Germany nor Austria can advance her a single million. In this case she must either be crushed between the contending forces, or, to save herself for the time, she will be forced into the Franco-Russian alliance.
>
> The transfer of her naval strength, or even of her naval material, to the Double Alliance would make the division of strength so even that an absolutely Titanic struggle could be the only possible result. For reasons that I need not explain now, I shall do my utmost to prevent the

separation of Italy from the Quadruple Alliance; but I am by no means confident of success, as there is a very strong feeling in the North against the extreme Radicalism of the present Italian Government.

The Czar has now twenty of his navigable balloons afloat, and another fleet is being manufactured in France so that as the work can be done. These machines will probably do fearful execution when the war breaks out.

The Quadruple Alliance does not possess a single machine of the kind that can be pitted against them. I know now that Tiburzi offered his balloon to Britain for a million, the price the Czar paid for it, because his wife is an Englishwoman, and the War Office, as usual, refused even to inspect it. That refusal will probably cost Britain pretty dear before the war is over.

By the time this has reached you the game will have been opened. It is already well known that there is in existence an air-ship far superior to the Czar's war balloons, but of course no one knows what side she will take. As a matter of fact the fate of the world will be decided, neither on land nor sea, but in the air.

You must therefore push on the construction of our Navy of the Future as rapidly as possible, so as to be ready for any emergency. With such tremendous forces engaged there is no telling when or how the supreme crisis may come, but when it does come you must be there in command of your aerial fleet.

I enclose a note from the Master, who would have gone out in the *Avondale* had not the risk of the long journey, in the present state of affairs, been too serious. He is at present in London making the final arrangements for the direction of our various diplomatic agents throughout Europe. From here he will go to my place in Yorkshire, where he will remain watching and as far as possible directing the course of events until you receive orders to take him to Aeria.

As soon as the fleet is ready and properly manned leave Roburoff in command of the colony, and come northward with your flagship as far as Plymouth. The *Lurline* will be lying there, and as soon as you are sighted a telegram will be sent to me, on receipt of which I shall go to Plymouth and put to sea. A hundred miles south-westward of the Land's End you will wait for us and pick us up. Then we will sink the *Lurline* and vanish. That is all I have to say at present, so, with greetings to all the comrades with you, believe me

Yours ever in the Cause,

ALAN TREMAYNE.

It is unnecessary to say that Arnold carried out the plan laid down in this letter from the Chief in every detail and with the utmost possible expedition. The *Avondale* arrived, without further adventure, at the island which had been chosen as the dockyard of the aerial fleet, and the building operations were at once commenced.

All the material for constructing the airships had been brought out completely finished as far as each individual part was concerned, and so there was nothing to do but to put them together. The crew and passengers of the steamer included the members of the Executive of the Inner Circle and sixty picked members of the Outer Circle, chiefly mechanics and sailors, destined to be first the builders and then the crews of the new vessels.

These, under Arnold's direction, worked almost day and night at the task before them. Three of the air-ships were put together at a time, twenty men working at each, and within a month from the time that the *Avondale* discharged her cargo the twelve new vessels were ready to take the air.

They were all built on the same plan as the *Ariel*, and eleven of them were practically identical with her as regards size and speed, but the twelfth, the flag-ship of the aerial fleet, had been designed by Arnold on a more ambitious scale.

This vessel was larger and much more powerful than any of the others. She was a hundred feet long with a beam of fifteen feet amidships. On her five masts she carried five fan-wheels capable of raising her vertically to a height of ten thousand feet without the assistance of her air-planes, and her three propellers, each worked by duplex engines, were able to drive her through the air at a speed of two hundred miles an hour in a calm atmosphere.

She was armed with two pneumatic guns forward and two aft, each twenty-five feet long and with a range of twelve miles at an altitude of four thousand feet, and in addition to these she carried two shorter ones on each broadside with a range of six miles at the same elevation. She also carried a sufficient supply of power-cylinders to give her an effective range of operations of twenty thousand miles without replenishing them.

In addition to the building materials and the necessary tools and appliances for putting them together, the cargo of the *Avondale* had included an ample supply of stores of all kinds, not the least important part of which consisted of a quantity of power-cylinders sufficient to provide the whole fleet three times over.

The necessary chemicals and apparatus for charging them were also on board, and the last use that Arnold made of the engines of the steamer, which he had disconnected from the propeller and turned to all kinds of uses during the building operations, was to connect them with his storage pumps and charge every available cylinder to its utmost capacity.

At length, when everything that could be carried in the air-ships had been taken out of the steamer, she was towed out into deep water, and then a shot from one of the flag-ship's broadside guns sent her to the bottom of the sea, so severing the last link which had connected the now isolated band of revolutionists with the world on which they were ere long to declare war.

The naming of the fleet was by common consent left to Natasha, and her half-oriental genius naturally led her to appropriately name the air-ships after the winged angels and air-spirits of Moslem and other eastern mythologies. The flag-ship she named the *Ithuriel*, after the angel who was sent to seek out and confound the Powers of Darkness in that terrific conflict between the upper and nether worlds, which was a fitting ante-type to the colossal struggle which was now to be waged for the empire of the earth.

Arnold's first task, as soon as the fleet finally took the air, was to put the captains and crews of the vessels through a thorough drilling in management and evolution. A regular code of signals had been arranged, by means of which orders as to formation, speed, altitude, and direction could be at once transmitted from the flag-ship. During the day flags were used, and at night flashes from electric reflectors.

The scene of these evolutions was practically the course taken by the *Ariel* from Aeria to the island; and, as the captains and lieutenants of the different vessels were all men of high intelligence and carefully selected for the work, and as the mechanism of the air-ships was extremely simple, the whole fleet was well in hand by the time the mountain mass of Aeria was sighted a week after leaving the island.

Arnold in the *Ithuriel* led the way to a narrow defile on the south-western side, which had been discovered during his first visit, and which admitted of entrance to the valley at an elevation of about 3,000 feet. Through this the fleet passed in single file soon after sunrise one lovely morning in the middle of June, and within an hour the thirteen vessels had come to rest on the shores of the lake.

Then for the first time, probably, since the beginning of the world, the beautiful valley became the scene of a busy activity, in the midst of which the lean wiry figure of Louis Holt seemed to be here, there, and everywhere at once, doing the honours of Aeria as though it were a private estate to which the Terrorists had come by his special invitation.

He was more than ever delighted with the air-ships, and especially with the splendid proportions of the *Ithuriel*, and the brilliant lustre of her polished hull, which had been left unpainted and shone as though her plates had been of burnished silver. Altogether he was well pleased with this invasion of a solitude which, in spite of its great beauty and his professed contempt for the world in general, had for the last few months been getting a good deal more tedious than he would have cared to admit.

In the absence of Natas and the Chief the command of the new colony devolved, in accordance with the latter's directions, upon Nicholas Roburoff, who was a man of great administrative powers, and who set to work without an hour's delay to set his new kingdom in order, marking out sites for houses and gardens, and preparing materials for building them and the factories for which the water-power of the valley was to be utilised.

Arnold, as Admiral of the Fleet, had transferred the command of the *Ariel* to Colston, but he retained him as his lieutenant in the *Ithuriel* for the next voyage, partly because he wanted to have him with him on what might prove to be a momentous expedition, and partly because Natasha, who was naturally anxious to rejoin her father as soon as possible, wished to have Radna for a companion in place of the Princess, who had elected to remain in the valley. As another separation of the lovers, who, according to the laws of the Brotherhood, now only waited for the formal consent of Natas to their marriage, was not to be thought of, this arrangement gave everybody the most perfect satisfaction.

Three days sufficed to get everything into working order in the new colony, and on the morning of the fourth the *Ithuriel*, having on board the original crew of the *Ariel*, reinforced by two engineers and a couple of sailors, rose into the air amidst the cheers of the assembled colonists, crossed the northern ridge, and vanished like a silver arrow into space.

To be continued.

HE: "Is there much between George and Hilda?"

She: "I saw them sitting on the sofa last evening, and you couldn't have put a knife between them."

"BUT you certainly ought to consider the wishes of your parents."

"Why should I? They didn't marry to please me."

"I'D like to be rich," said Tommy.

"How rich?" asked his sister.

"Oh," replied the young man, after some thought, "rich enough to wear my Sunday clothes every day."

"DALTON said he felt awfully cheap last night when Miss Savecash accepted him."

Morton: "Why?"

"Because she never takes anything unless it's a bargain."

SUNDAY-SCHOOL teacher, who keeps a fancy shop: "Now, who was it that crossed the Red Sea on dry land?"

Little eight-year old, after a long pause: "Samson, and how much are those little dolls with white dresses in your window?"

A FORMER rector of a certain Lancashire town was walking one misty night through a street in his parish when he fell into a deep hole on the top of the water-pipes, which were being repaired. There was no ladder by which he could make his escape, and he began to cry out for help. A labourer passing by heard the cries, and, looking down, asked the rector who he was. The rector told him, whereupon the labourer said, "Well, tha' con stop down a bit, tha'll not be wanted while Sunday."

MR. RUSKIN once had occasion to spend the night at a country inn. The landlord tried several times to ascertain the destination of his distinguished guest, without success. Mr. Ruskin turned upon him, and in a very decided tone, said: "Landlord, do I owe you anything?"

"Nothing, sir," was the reply.

"Well, then, I am going where I please."

The road forked out from the tavern, and it so happened that Mr. Ruskin was at a loss which road to take, and sent a servant back to inquire which of these roads led to the village of ——. The landlord, standing in front of the tavern, cried at the top of his voice: "Mr. Ruskin, you don't owe me a farthing; take which road you please."

RESULT OF ADDED WORD COMPETITION.

No. 3.

THE word with the highest numerical value was "trustworthy," page 612, column 3, line 1. It totalled up to 207. The next in order were "constructively," 206, and "[illegible]," = 206.

Guineas have been sent to the following five persons:—

T. L. Aldridge, Kitanda, Kingston Road, Oxford.
J. Smith, 31, Henry Street, Shieldfield, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
G. Rankin, 14, Mount Vernon View, Edge Hill, Liverpool.
R. Dowling, North Rad, Bainsford, Falkirk, N.B.
Daniel Loveday, 13, Trealaw Road, Trealaw, near Pontypridd, Glamorgan.

Pencil-cases have been forwarded to the first twenty-five persons named below, and penknives to the remaining twenty-five.

Harry Howes, 16, Ilderton Road, South Bermondsey; A. L. Lee, 61, High Street, Plaistow, E.; Mr. A. New, 7, Cavendish Buildings, Gilbert Street, Oxford St., W.; John F. Read, [illegible], Dawes Road, Fulham, S.W.; Stephen Watkins, 23, Albyn Road, St. John's, S.E.; W. Harris, 1[illegible], Upper Lewes Road, Brighton; Miss G. L. Wright, [illegible], Brunswick Terrace, Southsea; J. Sewell, 6, Market Street, Kettering, Northants; J. Sheppard, Clarence Villa, Shirehampton, near Bristol; Joseph Bury, [illegible], Railway Road, Darwen; Fred Farr, Union Infirmary, Hampton, Evesham; George H. Barton, 24, Woburn Road, Bedford; Mrs. Parker, [illegible], [illegible] Road, South Cliff, Scarborough; G. Vanstone, 149, High Street, Margate, Kent; E. A. Avery, R. N. Hospital, Haslar, Gosport, Hants; John S. Mooson, 21, Grosvenor Square, Broughton, Manchester; Miss Collinson, 41, Camden Hill Road, Upper Norwood; Mr. T. Casly, 6, Eldon Street, Sleckitts Hill, Chatham; Mrs. Scott, 20, Waverley Street, Hull; Henry Carlyle, 1, Devon Terrace, Swansea; G. E. Jefferey, Plas Uchaf, Abergele, North Wales; William Nott, 55, Jackson Street, North Shields; Isaac G. Elliott, 4, Elliott Terrace, Newcastle-on-Tyne; R. G. Thomas, 13, Lakefield Place, Llanelly, South Wales; C. H. Sykes, 2, Worcester Road, Redditch; H. Dean, Dorset County School, Dorchester; Robin Hood, 8, West Villas, West Street, Newbury; Miss A. Markey, Bailey Street, Oswestry; Mr. H. Jacobs, 48, Black Bull Road, Folkestone, Kent; William Stone, Goods Department, L. & Y. Railway Co., Bolton, Lancs.; Mrs. M. Harwood, 212, Park Street, Hockley, Birmingham; Frederick Thompson, 93, Tildes Street, Great Grimsby; Frank Buckland, St. Martha Printing Works, Chilworth, Surrey; J. Cave, Sandown Villa, Weybridge, Surrey; S. Gosling, 34, Russell Road, Wimbledon; John E. Williams, 24A, Childeric Road, New Cross, S.E.; Fred. S. Scott, 20, Lower Salthill, Galway, Ireland; A. Cowper Haining, 44, Parker Street, Ardwick, Manchester; Alexander Walker, 90, High Street, Peebles, Scotland; J. G. Goodman, Relief Offices, Rupert Street, Leicester; J. G. Kelway, Central Cottage, Castle Hill, Falmouth; Adam Hanning, Alexander Park, Manchester; Wm. Brown, 50, High Street, Sanquhar, Dumfriesshire; H. C. Gaiger, 103, Ashford Road, Eastbourne; E. Lerew, 7, Gloucester Place, King's Road, Windsor; J. P. Smith, care of Messrs. J. Wilson and Sons, Gallowgate, Newcastle-on-Tyne; E. H. Fisher, 1, Fermoy Road, Westbourne Park; T. Hall, 162, Cambridge Road, Kilburn, N.W.; W. J. Stewart, 33, Dalberg Road, Brixton, S.W.; Mrs. Cuming, 39, Leeson Park, Dublin.

"OH, mamma!" exclaimed a little girl, who saw a man with a bald head, "look at that gentleman with his hair parted all over!"

A MAN occasionally wishes that his children were as clever and pretty as some other children he knows; but their mother never does.

CLARA (after a tiff): "I presume you would like your ring back?"

George: "Never mind; keep it. No other girl I know could use that ring, unless she wore it on her thumb."

A LEGISLATOR is actively advocating a bill requiring the name of the physician who attended the deceased to be engraved on the tombstone. The consternation this causes in medical circles may be imagined, but never, no never described.

"Now, then, who is the plaintiff in this case?" asked his honour, as a case was called. No reply. "I ask who is the plaintiff in this case?" continued the Court.

"I don't know anything about plaintiffs," replied a man in the corner, as he slowly rose; "but if you are asking for the chap who was chased a mile and a half, and then mopped all over his own barnyard by two desperadoes, I'm your man."

MAMMA: "Oh, Bertie, here you are again all covered with mud from head to foot."

Bertram (in tears): "It isn't my fault. I was sailing on a plank, when Willie Meigs gave me a push, and over I went."

Mamma: "Well, what are you crying so about. Is it painful to be covered with mud?"

Bertram: "No, it ain't; but I thought that if I came in laughing you would whip me."

RESULT OF CONTENTS BILL COMPETITION.

THE competitors seem to have found some little difficulty in making thirteen original suggestions for a Contents Bill, though in each set there have generally been three or four ideas of more than average merit.

The first prize of two guineas is awarded to—

P. S. CALLARD, 15, Batavia Road, New Cross, S.E.

and the second of one guinea to—

J. ROSS SMITH, 5, Dalkeith Road, Edinburgh.

THE Puzzle set in issue for week ending April 18th was purposely a difficult one, as those in previous issues had been rather extra easy. But in trying to hit the happy medium we set competitors too hard a task, with the result that not one correct solution is to hand. So this week a hundred are offered instead of fifty.

FICTION.

THE TRYST.

Just behind the crimson curtain,
  She is waiting, silent, still;
Of his coming she is certain,
  And her being's fibres thrill.

Out the window, just before her,
  Is a blinding, raging storm,
And the flickerish lantern o'er her
  Throws soft light on graceful form.

In the grate a fire glistens,
  Shining o'er the polished floor;
Still she waits, and still she listens,
  Near the half-way opened door.

She's a sinuous, supple creature,
  And her eyes gleam bright and clear;
Beauty lies in every feature,
  Ah, at last! At last he's here!

Just a moment, and he hears her,
  Then she springs upon her feet.
He, it must be said, he fears her,
  But, like her, he's lithe and fleet.

There's excitement, there's a scurry,
  Out the doorway, through the house
He is in a desperate hurry:
  She's a cat, and he's a mouse!

An Impromptu Excursion.—"Now, my dear," exclaimed Mr. Timmins, as he dashed into the room, "bustle about. It's now eight o'clock; the boat for Clacton starts at nine thirty, and I'm going. I'm not the man to go pleasuring alone. I want society, and there's no society, Mrs. Timmins, that I admire so much as yours."

Mrs. Timmins flushed up with pleasure. "That gives me an hour and twenty-five minutes to dress. I can do it in that time."

"I don't see how you make that out. The boat leaves from the Old Swan Pier, Mrs. Timmins; it doesn't leave from our front door, there, and you haven't mor'n an hour to dress. I'll shave while you are getting ready, and we'll take dinner to-day within the sound of the surf, right within the sound of the surf, you know."

Mr. Timmins stropped his razor, and shaved himself carefully. Mrs. Timmins went from one cupboard to another, and threw everything out on the bed. In half an hour Mr. Timmins was prepared for the voyage, and admonished Mrs. Timmins to bestir herself.

"But I haven't commenced yet!" objected the lady.

"Haven't commenced! What have you been doing all this time? What have you been up to? Do you know it's half-past eight?"

"Well, my dear, you were at the glass shaving, and I didn't want to disturb you."

"Oh, you didn't! Of course not! You can't put on a frock without the glass, can you? You've got to have a looking-glass to button your boots. D'you suppose you can get ready in half an hour? Why weren't you ready when I came in?"

"Never mind, dear, I'll be in time. You go down in the parlour, and I'll be there in a minute."

Mr. Timmins growled his way downstairs. Mrs. Timmins hurried on her skirt, put on her hat, and then prepared to dress herself.

"Are you ready?" bawled Mr. Timmins, when he'd waited about three minutes.

"In a minute," piped Mrs. Timmins, feeling round the small of her back after an invisible string.

"Perhaps I'd better go over and tell the boat to come round for you in the morning. Maybe you're acquainted with the steamboat. P'raps you've got influence enough with that steamboat to make it wait a month or two for you," and Mr. Timmins went out on the steps and glared up and down the street.

Mrs. Timmins took off her hat, brushed her hair, and screwed herself round like a giraffe to find another string. Then she opened the top drawer, and pulled half a dozen pieces of lace out of a green box. Putting her fingers to her lip she began to consider which piece she had better wear.

"If you're coming with me, you've got to start!" bawled Mr. Timmins. "What do you take me for, a season ticket, that you can go on any time? Are you coming?"

"In a minute. I'll be there in a minute," gasped Mrs. Timmins, clutching the piece of lace she did'nt want. "I'm only looking for my parasol."

Mr. Timmins thumped the balusters for about a minute.

"What's the matter with you now? What under the sun are you up to? Do you know I asked you to go to Clacton about six weeks ago? How many clothes are you putting on? How much toggery do you need? If I can find an engine powerful enough, I'm going to have you dressed by steam hereafter until the fuel gives out. Are you going to Clacton with me or not?"

"Yes, dear, I'm ready," and Mrs. Timmins rustled down stairs. "Won't you please pin the centre of my overskirt to the centre of my dress?"

Mr. Timmins went at it. Mrs. Timmins pulled her hat round straight and drew on her gloves, and then glanced down her back to see how her liege lord was getting on.

"Stand still, can't you? How d'you suppose I can tell the middle of anything while you're twisting round like a grindstone. Stand up straight. I don't know what—hang the thing!" and he ran the pin into his thumb.

"Oh, dear, I'm so sorry!" said Mrs. Timmins.

"Oh, yes! you're sorry! Why weren't you sorry before I began? What d'you come down here half dressed for? What d'you suppose I am, a broken-backed seamstress. That thumb won't be well for a year and a half. Hang the dress! Don't you know how to pin yourself up yet? You wait here, I'll be back soon; I'm just going for a pile-driver to fasten you together!"

"Never mind, dear; it doesn't matter if it isn't pinned."

"Doesn't matter!" howled Mr. Timmins, "doesn't matter! What d'you ask me to pin it for, then? What d'you do it for, just to see me mutilate my thumb. Look here, are you going with me, or going to stand here like an eight-day clock? It's past nine, and you've seven more hours' dressing to do, haven't you?"

"I'm ready, my dear. I'm only waiting for you."

They took a cab, and as they got out, Mrs. Timmins rushed for the pier.

"What's the matter with you now? Can't you see there's plenty of time?" reasoned Mr. Timmins.

She accommodated her steps to his, and in due time they reached the pier with fifteen minutes to spare.

"Another time when I want to go anywhere, Mrs. Timmins, you just be ready the moment I speak. I won't be kept waiting all day for anybody. You hear me, do you?"

"Yes, dear," said Mrs. Timmins, beginning to realise that she had left her fan, smelling bottle, parasol, veil, and handkerchief at home in her hurry, and had forgotten to close the window in case of rain.

Art Intelligence.—She (reads): "There are upwards of fifty painters and sculptors now in Rome—"

He (British Philistine): "Ah, no wonder we couldn't get that scullery whitewashed!"

"See here, George," said a fond mother to her little son as they walked on the beach, "what a lot of nice little round stones."

"Yes," grumbled Georgie, as he cast a searching glance round, "and not a blessed thing to throw 'em at!"

A gentleman who had been at great expense to adorn his garden with statuary was much chagrined recently to hear an old man from the country say to his wife, as they gazed upon the statues, "Jes see what a waste, Belinda! Here's no less than six scarecrows in this ten-foot patch, and any one of 'em would keep the crows from a five-acre field."

A Hampshire man tied a four-pound stone to the end of a cow's tail to keep that member quiet while he milked her. After they got the fragments of teeth out of his mouth, and put arnica and a bandage on his jaw, he stated that he never should repeat the experiment, as the end of the tail hit as hard a blow as he cared to endure.

She was a frivolous young woman with young men galore, but one with only a small income seemed to be the favourite.

"You'll have to work hard before you win that girl," said his mother.

"And a good deal harder after you win her," answered his father, who knew what he was talking about.

In London a short time ago a north-country editor was met by a friend, who, taking him affectionately by the hand, exclaimed: "I am delighted to see you; how long are you going to stay?"

"Why, I think," said the editor, "I shall stay as long as my money lasts."

"How disappointed I am," said his friend; "I hoped you were going to stay a day or two."

Not long ago an old pioneer, who had lived in Texas in the days of the early colonists, was boasting of the good old times.

"Why, sir, I was once offered a league of land for a pair of old boots."

"Didn't you take it?" said the party addressed.

"No, sir, I didn't."

"Poor land, I reckon?"

"Why, bless your heart, sir, it was the best land outdoors. Grass five feet high, a clear stream of water running through it, and an undeveloped silver mine in one corner."

"And why in thunder didn't you make the trade?"

"Because," said the old man, in a regretful tone of voice—"Because I didn't have the boots!"

FACTS.

Dew is a great respecter of colours. To prove this take pieces of glass or boards and paint them red, yellow green, and black. Expose them at night, and you will find that the yellow will be covered with moisture, that the green will be damp, but that the red and black will be left perfectly dry.

A piece of genuine Japanese lacquer costs the native artist almost a lifetime to perfect, and is produced by hundreds of thin coats of lacquer laid on at considerable intervals of time, the value consisting rather in the labour bestowed than in the quality of the material used. First-class lacquer work can scarcely be scratched by a needle.

The place to see thoroughgoing stage realism is America. There is about to be produced in New York a play called "The Journalist," in which realism is carried to almost a grotesque length. One of the scenes is a printing-office, where there is a real press at work, real type-setting going on, and a newspaper is actually produced before the eyes of the audience.

Eighty years ago in Edinburgh it was the custom for a man to walk through the town every day at noon bearing a large shin bone of beef. His cry was "Three stirs and a wallop for a bawbee." All the housewives had their vegetables stewing for the family soup, and gladly paid their bawbee for the privilege of three stirs with the bone, which was supposed to flavour the stew.

The Queen made her will in 1876. It is engrossed on vellum, quarto size, and is bound as a volume, secured with a private lock. Several blank pages have been left at the end of the book for codicils, some of which have already been added. Thus, when the Princess Alice died, in 1878, modifications of the bequests were rendered necessary, and in the summer of 1884, after the Duke of Albany's death, further revisions were imperative. One entry relates entirely to the disposal of the Queen's Jubilee gifts, which are not the property of the nation.

In trapping tigers for export, the Malays dig a hole about ten feet deep, making the bottom twice as large in area as the top, to prevent the animal from jumping out after being once in. The hole completed, small brushwood is lightly laid over its surface, and close by in the direction of the mouth of the pit, a bullock is chained to a tree. On seeing the bullock, the tiger springs for its expected prey, and alights in the pit. A bamboo cage is placed over the pit, which is then filled with earth, the tiger gradually coming to the surface. Once in the cage, the Malays lace and interlace bamboo and rattan under the tiger.

The position of woman in Corea is peculiar. She appears to be at the same time honoured and abused. Travellers vouch for the brutality with which she is frequently treated. Yet her privacy is strictly respected. She is not compelled to prostrate herself upon the passage of a noble. In addressing her, the honorific terms of which the language has so ample a store are never omitted, and she is allowed the run of the empty streets after dark, when no male may be abroad without due permission, upon pain of a severe flogging. As is the case with woman throughout the East, her position improves as she grows older; the mother-in-law indeed wields despotic sway over the whole family.

The most peculiarly situated flight of steps in the United Kingdom is that leading from the south side of London Bridge into Tooley Street. The steps in question have become much worn, and accidents consequently occurring, it became necessary to apply to the responsible authorities to repair. Who was to be applied to? That was the difficulty, as careful search showed that the top of the steps belonged to the Corporation of London, being within the City; that the main body of the steps was within the boundary of the St. Saviour's district, while the foot of the flight was found to be in the district of St. Olave's. A nice puzzle to parochial geography, and a grand opportunity, which was not lost, of referring applicants from pillar to post.

I hereby certify that the premium in respect of PEARSON'S WEEKLY £1,000 RAILWAY INSURANCE, and also of the GENERAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE has been paid up to May 25th, 1893, and that therefore every purchaser of PEARSON'S WEEKLY is insured with this Company against Fatal Railway Accident to the extent of ONE THOUSAND POUNDS under the conditions named in the coupon on page 647, and against all General Accidents, to the extent and under the conditions named in the coupon on page 645.

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Her Majesty's washing bill is a long one. It runs to £3,000 a year.

FAMOUS SUICIDES.

Aristarchus starved himself to death out of weariness of life.

Chatterton killed himself in despair at the failure of all his projects.

Lucretius, the great Latin poet, stabbed himself in a fit of disgust with life.

Cassius fell by his own dagger, after the battle of Philippi—the same dagger, it is said, with which he stabbed Cæsar.

Homer, it is said, hanged himself in extreme old age because, after long trial, he could not solve the "Fisherman's Puzzle."

Saul, the first King of Israel, killed himself rather than be slain by the Philistines. Defeated in battle, and his kingdom gone, he had nothing to live for.

Lake his great guest, Hannibal, Mithridates killed himself by poison to avoid falling into the hands of the Romans. He preferred death to appearance in the triumphal procession of a Roman general.

The great Zeno lived a quiet and happy life until the age of ninety-eight, when one day he accidentally stumbled and broke his thumb. He interpreted the accident as a summons from earth, and so hanged himself.

Cato was the typical Roman suicide. He killed himself with a dagger on the approach of Cæsar's forces to Utica, knowing that the cause of liberty was lost, and being unwilling to survive the downfall of his country.

Balmaceda, the fallen President of Chili, after the revolution which resulted in the overthrow of his Government, took refuge in the house of a friend, but, finding every avenue of escape closed, shot himself rather than surrender and be torn to pieces by the enraged populace.

Sardanapalus, the luxurious Oriental monarch, finding himself hard pressed by his enemies, gathered his guards, his wives, concubines, and children, together with all his treasures, and set fire to the building, thus thwarting the hope his foes entertained of taking him alive.

Lord Londonderry, better known as Lord Castlereagh, killed himself in a fit of insanity produced by over work and worry. Noticing his depression, his attendants removed all razors, knives, and other means of self-destruction, but overlooked a small pen-knife, with which he cut his throat.

The late King of Bavaria saved himself from deposition by a timely death, being found drowned in the fish-pond of one of his palaces. He had, no doubt, been insane for many years, and his crazy expenditure cost his subjects so much money that, finding the State nearly bankrupt, they resolved to displace him, and the knowledge of this, no doubt, drove him to self-destruction.

Jacques du Chastel, Bishop of Soissons, had accompanied Louis IX. (St. Louis) on the African crusade, and finding that nothing had been accomplished, and that the army was about to return in disgrace to France, refused to go, took leave of his friends, partook of the sacrament, mounted his horse fully equipped for battle, charged alone into the Saracen camp, where he was at once cut to pieces.

The traditions of the early Christian Church affirm that Pontius Pilate, after being dismissed from his place as Governor of Judea, was sent in disgrace to Spain, where he lived for a time, and was then allowed to reside in Switzerland, where he committed suicide in a villa at the base of the mountain which bears his name. There is no historic evidence to support the statement to be found outside the early Christian writings.

Sappho killed herself by jumping from the Lover's Leap, a Leucadian cliff. This leap was often taken by lovesick persons, who believed that if they survived the fall they would be effectually cured of a hopeless passion. The leaps were always witnessed by crowds of spectators, and the would-be suicides were in no way interfered with by the State. Boats were in attendance below to pick up the leapers if they came to the surface of the sea after the plunge. Sappho had a passion for a young man who did not return her love, and leaped from the cliff in order to be cured.

Mark Antony gave the world for a woman's love, but he found himself so poorly compensated by the exchange, that, in desperation at the approach of Octavius, and being informed that Cleopatra was endeavouring to make terms for herself by surrendering him, he stabbed himself with his dagger. Being revived, he received the message sent by Cleopatra that she desired to see him; he was carried to her place of refuge. Cleopatra and her maids raised him by ropes to the window of the tower where the fallen queen found her last home; he was lifted in, and died in her arms.

Defeated at Zama, Hannibal fled to the east to avoid falling into the hands of the Romans, and found temporary security in the dominions of Mithridates. He incited this monarch to engage in a Roman war, and his advice as to its conduct being rejected the war proved unsuccessful, and Mithridates was required, as one of the conditions of peace, to deliver up Hannibal to his enemies, the Romans. The unfortunate Carthaginian heard of his approaching fate, swallowed the poison which for years he had carried about his person, and expired just as the envoys arrived to take him in charge.

The story that Cleopatra killed herself by allowing an asp to bite her has long been believed, but probably has no better historical basis than the fanciful imagination of a gossipy Roman historian. For some time before her death she made careful preparations for that event, and tried many different kinds of poisons on her unfortunate slaves to see which would produce death with the least apparent agony. She probably died by one of these poisons, for she was as adept in such matters as any of the Borgias. No asp was found in her room, and the wound on her breast supposed to have been that of its bite, probably has another origin, for her whole body was covered with bruises, where she in Egyptian fashion had struck herself with her fists, and torn her flesh with her nails in her grief for the loss of Antony.

The famous Lord Clive, who added the Empire of India to the British crown, was the most distinguished suicide of the last century. When a youth in India he attempted to blow his brains out with a pistol. It twice missed fire, and after examining it to see if it was properly loaded, he said: "Surely I have something great to do in the world." Always peculiar, his health suffered severely from the torrid climate of India, and even before he left the peninsula to return to Europe, indications of mental aberration were plainly visible. He died by his own hand just before the outbreak of the American Revolution, a fortunate circumstance for the United States, for had he lived he would undoubtedly have been sent to take command of the British forces in America, and the result might have been very different.

Suicide was a fitting termination to the career of a monster like Nero. Deserted by every friend, and in momentary danger of falling into the hands of his enemies, he could not summon up courage to take his own life. By turns he wept, prayed to the gods, and cursed his fate. He begged some of the attendants to die first, in order to teach him fortitude. They respectfully declined. There was a knock on the door of the miserable abode in which he had taken shelter. The soldiers sent by the Senate to arrest him had come. In desperation he seized a dagger and gave himself a slight wound in the throat. But the effort would have been a failure had not his freed man lent assistance, and pushed the dagger into a vital point. He had sufficient strength left on the entry of the soldiers to mutter something that they understood to be, "Is this your fidelity?" and immediately expired, even in death his countenance retaining the appalling ferocity that distinguished it in life.

IT HURT HIS FEELINGS.

On one of the volunteer ranges in the North is a well-known old Irish sergeant. I may mention, says a correspondent, that he went through three wars—the Crimean, the Indian Mutiny, and the Chinese—and during the whole of that time never received a single wound.

Old W——, as he is called, occasionally acts as marker at the targets, and his utter recklessness has become a proverb. He has been known to walk forth from behind the mantelet without the slightest warning, and touch up a bull's-eye which did not quite satisfy him, or to note the exact position of a shot. At all remonstrances he would sniff contemptuously: "Me be shot?" he would ask, "Why, I've been through three war-r-rs and was never shot yet. Pah! phwat's a bit o' lead flying through the air?" and he would assume an air of disgust.

It actually occurred, however, at last, and he was shot through the shoulder. For a moment, as frequently happens with rifle shots, such is their terrible force, he did not know he was struck; then, when he observed the blood streaming down his sleeve, he commenced to walk down the range right in the line of fire.

It was seen that something was wrong, and we hurried to meet him. As we did so he tottered, and had to be carried. "Shot," he groaned, with a look of shame; "shot, and by a Saturday afternoon soldier!"

Chawles (who wants her to ask him not to go): "I have made my plans to go this summer to the Chicago Exhibition."

Ethel: "Won't that be nice! Shall you go as a visitor, or—as an exhibit?"

Young Wife (complainingly): "You haven't brought me a box of chocolate since we were married."

Young Husband: "That's queer. Come to think, you haven't remarked that you so enjoyed the smoke of a good cigar since we were married."

SOCIETY NEWS.

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"QUEER STREET."

PEOPLE WITH GRIEVANCES. No. 2.—The Deceased Wife's Sister.

A PAGE DEVOTED TO PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

ODD CORNERS OF THE EARTH. No. 5.—An Orinoco Prairie.

A STRAIGHT TALK WITH GERMANY.

A BIG CATCH.

"Could you, standing at the foot of St. Paul's, catch a cricket-ball thrown from the top of the dome?"

Ninety-nine cricketers out of a hundred would answer this question in the affirmative, and in all probability the hundredth would be quite willing to attempt the feat.

Perhaps it is as well that the various authorities concerned might object to the actual carrying out of the experiment, for the consequences would certainly be disastrous.

The height of St. Paul's is 404 feet, and a ball dropped from the top would be travelling with a speed of 160 feet per second at the time of its contact with the earth.

The following simple comparison will show that no living man could catch and hold a ball travelling with such an enormous velocity as this.

The longest hit on record is just over 200 yards, and the ball was in this instance driven into the air at an angle of 45 degrees.

Now, allowing the same ball to have been hit in the same direction, at the same angle, with sufficient force to give it the velocity which it would acquire in falling vertically from a height of 404 feet, it would have travelled 269 yards instead of a trifle over 200.

Then just contemplate for a moment the awful consequences of trying to catch a ball the instant it leaves the bat even on a 200 yards' journey. The hands would unquestionably be reduced to a state of pulp without that extra sixty-nine yards.

AN UNLUCKY DAY.

"Well, James, how are you feeling to-day?" said the Carbally minister to one of his parishioners the other day, an old man suffering from chronic rheumatism. "I hope the pains are nothing worse; you are not looking so brisk as usual to-day."

"Na, sir," replied the old fellow sadly, "I've been gey unfortinit the day."

"How, James? In what way?" queried the pastor.

"Weel, sir," was the reply. "I got a letter frae a Glesca lawyer body this marnin' tellin' me that ma cousin Jock was deid, an' that he had left me twa hunner poun'."

"Two hundred pounds!" repeated the minister. "And you call that hard luck? Why, it is quite a fortune for you, James."

"Ay," said the old man sorrowfully, "but the stupid lawyer body didna put enough stamps on his letter, an' I had a penny to pey for extra postage."

THE POETRY OF THE SEAS.

Does anyone think how much the sea has lost its poetry since the steam-engine took the place of sails for propulsion, and the iron-clad battle-ship superseded the glorious old three-decker?

This fact came forcibly to my mind this week when I was looking at an account of a battle between the fleets of Chili and Peru, in the last war between those countries, and comparing it with Trafalgar, Navarino, the attack of Sir Francis Drake on the Spanish Armada, or the battles described in Maryatt's novels.

Ships or fleets approaching each other full sail, manœuvring for the weather gauge, damage to sail or rigging, seeking a position to rake one's adversary fore and aft, and nearly everything that goes to aid the pen of the narrator or the tongue of the veteran at the fireside, all are absent in the modern story of battle.

Compare the account of the fight between Chilian and Peruvian ironclads, and that of the *Constitution* and *Java* off the coast of Brazil, in the war of 1812, and also with other battles in which the *Constitution* was engaged, and note the difference.

In the fight of the ironclads not a man is visible on the deck of either, and as for rigging to be shot away and sails to be handled during the action there are none at all. The battle consists almost wholly of a discharge of cannon and attempts to use or avoid the ram, and there is little else to describe, while in the meeting of the old-timers there is a great deal to be told.

The British ship had the position to windward and bore down upon her antagonist; they began at two o'clock and fought for half an hour at short range, and the wheel of the *Constitution* was shot away, but her captain, Bainbridge, managed his crippled ship so that he got in a raking fire on the *Java*; then the two vessels ran free with the wind on their quarter, and at three o'clock the *Java* sought to close in by running on the *Constitution's* quarters.

Her jibboom penetrated the mizzen of the enemy's ship and—but I am not intending to give the whole story, and only offer the above as a sample to show how prosaic steam and iron have made us to-day.

Even the old sailor phrases must give way to new ones; the mariner can no longer exclaim, "Shiver my timbers!" as there are no timbers to be shivered. He may say, "Dent my plates!" but this phrase has not the nautical ring.

If you are going anywhere by water this summer carry a pound of cork about with you. It is sufficient to hold you up if you ever tumble overboard.

SHE WAS YORKSHIRE TOO.

SOME years ago a man whom we will call Farmer Grayson transferred his custom from the chief hotel at Easingwold, Yorkshire, to a minor public kept by a Mrs. Barker. He got his dinner at her farmers' ordinary, for which he paid one-and-six as usual.

One day, the old lady noticed that the hearty old buffer ate more than an ordinary share of animal food for the sum paid. She therefore determined, at the earliest opportunity, to see how much he could consume.

The next time he came she so arranged matters that there was no room for him at the table, so she bustled him into an ante-room, where he found a steaming leg of mutton awaiting him, with a good supply of vegetables, plum-pudding, cheese, and celery.

Old Grayson, not a whit displeased, set to in good earnest, and when he had finished there was nothing left of the leg of mutton excepting the bones, roughly cleaned.

The hostess had a sly peep into the ante-room, and, as Grayson passed the bar, he offered to pay for his dinner and a "quart o' yell"—two shillings.

The old lady declined to accept payment on the ground of having inconvenienced him so much. Delighted with his cheap dinner, Grayson essayed to lift his market basket from a hook on the ceiling, and, finding it lighter than it should be, he tore off the cloth and yelled out:

"Here, Mrs. Barker, wha's stoon mi lig o' mutton?"

"Wha, ye aad fooil, ye've hed it t' yer dinner!"

Farmer Grayson walked off to his trap, cursing and swearing. From that day he ceased to be an attendant at Mrs. Barker's ordinary.

A PARSEE PRIEST.

THE duties which fall to the lot of a Parsee high priest are not at all enviable. Hachisuka Ramsjhii, who is a man of the kind, initiated me into some of the mysteries that surround his creed when I was in Yezd a little time ago.

The deity that he worships, Ahura-Mazdao, is imagined to be the origin of fire, and consequently all the temples and altars are fed with what is said to be the Holy Flame brought down from heaven. Anyone found meddling with this fire gets all the religious frenzy taken out of him rather quickly. The priests do not stop to ask questions, but avail themselves of the close proximity of the furnace by placing the erring gentleman in it, after having humanely despatched him with the holy knife.

It speaks well for the piety of the Parsees to say that such occurrences are very rare. They venerate the fire too deeply to pollute it with their touch.

Fasting, celibacy, and other self-castigations, are not recognised by the Parsees, in fact, such proceedings are considered offending to the Divinity.

Among the most unpleasant functions that Mr. Ramsjhii has to perform is the superintendence of a burial. The Parsee cemetery consists of a Dakhma, or Tower of Silence, over the top of which is an iron grating with bars fairly wide apart.

The priests take the corpse from the bier-carriers, and climb to the summit of the tower, where they strip the body and lay it on the iron, fully exposed to the ravages of the birds of prey and the elements. Not a word is spoken during the ceremony, and all that can be heard is the stifled sobbing of the mourners, who return over the plain to the town where they live.

At certain periods the priests visit the Tower and remove to a cavern the bones of the deceased as they become bare and bleached, and fall through the grating into the pit below.

Hachisuka Ramsjhii is about fifty-four years of age, married, and with a family of three boys. Mrs. Ramsjhii at one time was a fruit-seller in the streets of Teheran, and the young priest fell in love and married her shortly after his accession to office.

They live in a small mud-built house that is really an eye-sore, although the ugliness is to a certain extent redeemed by the beauty of the garden that surrounds the dwelling. But once inside and you are relieved of any doubt as to whether the Guebre and the Irish peasant are on a par.

In such a lowly habitation as that of a priest luxury and elegance abound, for, in concurrence with his precept, Ramsjhii looks rather to internals than to outward appearances.

"Do you pray for your husband?" asked the minister of Mrs. Biff.

"I don't need to," replied she, "I've got him."

IT is said that a servant who plumed herself upon being employed in a "genteel family" was asked the definition of the term. "Where they have three kinds of wine, and the gentleman swears," was the reply.

MADGE: "I love Cholly even for his weaknesses."
MAY: "But has he many?"
MADGE: "One, very pronounced. Kleptomania."
MAY: "Stealing? Oh, how terrible!"
"Yes, but they're only—er—kisses."

A SERMON TO MEASURE.

DR. X—— is an eloquent preacher, but he belongs to the old-fashioned school, and finds it difficult to adapt himself to the modern fashion of short discourses. It is a standing joke in his family that after writing a sermon he has to cut it up into a series of discourses.

On one occasion he received a note from a well-known clerical brother asking if he would deliver a sermon upon some especial church festival.

The doctor replied that he had just completed a sermon upon the "Golden Calf," which seemed to him appropriate.

The answer, as sent by telegram by the brother clergyman, who knew Dr. X—— intimately and was acquainted with his ability to take a joke, read as follows:

"'Golden Calf' just the thing. A forequarter is all that will be needed."

THE PROGRESSIVE CONUNDRUM.

"MISS GRACIE," he said with an engaging smile, "did you ever try your hand at one of these progressive conundrums?"

"What is a progressive conundrum, Mr. Spoonamore?" inquired the young lady.

"Haven't you heard of them? Here is one: Why is a ball of yarn like the letter 't'? Because a ball of yarn is circular, a circular is a sheet, a sheet is flat, a flat is £10 a month, £10 a month is dear, a deer is swift, a swift is a swallow, a swallow is a taste, a taste is an indication, an indication is an angle, an angle is a point, a point is an object aimed at, an object aimed at is a target, a target is a mark, a mark is an impression, an impression is a stamp, a stamp is a thing stuck on, a thing stuck on is a young man in love, and a young man in love is like this letter 't,' because he stands before 'u,' Miss Gracie."

"I don't think you have the answer quite right," said the young lady. "A ball of yarn is round, a round is a steak, a stake is a wooden thing, a wooden thing is a young man in love, and a young man in love is like the letter 't,' because, Mr. Spoonamore—" and she spoke clearly and distinctly—"because he is often crossed."

The young man understood. He took his hat and his progressive conundrums and vanished from Miss Gracie Garlinghouse's alphabet for ever.

NOT TO BE PITIED.

FIRST among the Turkish social topics is that of the harem. The Koran allows a Mussulman to have four wives, and many persons have consequently imagined polygamy is a rule in Turkey, whereas it is the exception. A Mussulman may only have as many wives as he can keep in comfort, and it is only the very rich who can afford four.

The middle-class Turks have only one wife apiece; the men of the lowest class are often obliged to remain single from not having the means to support a consort in the style which the Moslem law enjoins.

Nothing can be more un-Turkish than the Mormon idea of accumulating a number of women to live under one roof, quarrelling in the kitchen and parlour, and acting as household drudges for their husbands. The Turkish wife is not a slave; the chief fault to find with her is that she has too lofty a sense of her own dignity.

An advocate of female rights would have some difficulty in persuading her that her lot was pitiable. She has never envied the emancipation of Christian women, whose free ways shock her, while she has noticed that they get much less respect from the men of their faith than that which is invariably vouchsafed to herself. She veils her face with no more regret than a western lady unveils her shoulders.

Turkish women are not shut up. They go out when they please, attended by their odalika if rich, or holding their children by the hand; and their magpie voices fill the bazaars, for they are noisy talkers. Whenever they pass men of all creeds stand aside deferentially.

If a husband meets a wife in the street he makes no sign of recognition; if he perceives her halting before a draper's stall and gazing significantly at a silk dearer than he can afford, he must possess his soul in resignation, muttering "Masshallah." This respect for women prevails also in the home circle, and it comes naturally to the Mussulman, who has been taught from his boyhood to behave courteously to the softer sex.

The Western conjugal expression about "wearing the breeches" has its Turkish counterpart in the phrase to "live under the slipper"; and it is to be feared that not a few Turks know the taste of this implement of uxorial persuasion. A hamal (street porter) once came before a cadi to complain that his wife trounced him too frequently.

"See what mine does," answered the magistrate, opening his gown and showing some weals on his neck and shoulders. "Go thy way, my son, and thank Allah that thou art luckier than I."

THE RIVAL IN THE MIRROR.

WHO has not laughed to see a cat face herself in the mirror? Miss Puss puts up her back, ruffles her fur, maybe spits a little, but always in the end gives up the problem as beneath her contempt, and goes to sleep. Not so the monkey. His ire may not be so great, but his curiosity is not thus easily satisfied.

At a zoological garden recently a gentleman passed into the monkey-house a mirror with a tin-foil back. It was seized by a long-tailed monkey.

Immediately he looked in he got angry. The presumed rival was so handsome that he was seized with a pang of jealousy, and he went on a hunt. Holding the glass very still, he suddenly jerked it down and looked—no rival in sight.

Then he ducked his head, but the rival ducked too. He grew cunning, and peeped in slyly; it was of no avail. He put up his paw, scratched his head, and then tried to grab his lordship from behind the glass. No game.

He now put the glass on the floor, but there was his rival as large as life. He pointed his finger, and so did the other, and that raised his temper to the danger pitch. If he grinned, frowned, or chattered, the other did the same.

Ah! now he had it. That monkey must be between the tinfoil and the glass. He picked at it as it rested against his breast. That fetched him.

The monkey showed up with a great gash across his nose! Another! His chest had gone. All four fingers at once. The rival was riddled, and the victory was won. The monkey was happy once more, and almost wept with joy, as he hung from his perch by his tail.

THE SOFA IN GERMANY.

AMONG Germans of the more comfortable class, who live from generation to generation in the same house, every piece of furniture has its own history, and makes its own associations. The sofa is given the prominent place in a room, and before it usually stands a round or oval table. It is difficult for a stranger to understand the importance of the sofa in marking social distinctions.

As soon as visitors arrive a certain dignified commotion begins. If the caller is a lady of lower social standing than the mistress of the house, she must take a chair, while the hostess sits alone upon the sofa; but should she be of higher degree, the matter would be otherwise decided.

This decorous disturbance reaches its highest point when there is a tea party or Kaffeeklatsch—coffee gossip—for then the oldest lady with the grandest title must sit on the sofa, and the next in rank occupies the place nearest her.

As the proudest usually arrives latest, a general stir is likely to take place. For if the Frau Doctor, the wife of a physician or scholar, is sitting on the sofa, she must vacate her position should a Frau Professor appear. The Frau Majorin, or wife of a major, may be heartily enjoying the seat of honour, but she must yield it without hesitation when the Frau Generalin arrives. The entire company will rise at such a moment to do honour to the distinguished guest, and a general readjustment of places is likely to occur.

Neither unmarried men nor very young women can expect to enjoy the privilege of sitting on a German sofa.

A young English gentleman living in Strasburg was quite ignorant of these fine distinctions, and one day invited a German visitor to take a seat near the window, in order to enjoy a view of the Cathedral, and then, to the amazement of his guest, quietly seated himself on the sofa. The fact that he was an Englishman, and consequently ignorant of German customs, was all that saved him from the reputation of boorishness.

At another time, however, he committed the deeper offence of seating himself on the sofa when he was calling upon two ladies, who were scarcely able to conceal their disapproval of such rudeness.

The piece of furniture which stands next in honour to the sofa is the easy-chair, which is sometimes called Sorgenstuhl, or chair of cares. If a German sits down to worry, he must have a comfortable seat, that so important a mood may be endured with dignity. A common chair would not serve his purpose in the least. But the Sorgenstuhl is, so to speak, for domestic and personal crises only; the sofa is a part of the entire social framework, never to be carelessly regarded.

PORTER: "Sir, what do you mean by walking over that lady's foot?"

New Yorker: "Thunderation, man, do you think I've got wings!"

THE latest anecdote about an old lady who thinks that she "knows everything" is how she went to visit her sister, and as she entered the room her nieces said: "Good evening, Auntie, we are glad you have come; we are going to have tableaux this evening."

"Yes, I know," was the reply, "I smelt 'em."

When you get a few moments to yourself, just see if it is a fact that the letters of the alphabet can be transposed 620,448,401,733,239,439,360,000 times. We believe they can.

HOME NOTES.

A PAGE MORE PARTICULARLY FOR LADIES.

ISOBEL will be glad to answer, in this page, questions of general interest upon household matters, so far as space permits. Envelopes should be marked HOME NOTES.

Bitter Butter is the result of letting milk stand too long before it is skimmed.

When Calicoes are Difficult to Machine together, rub well with yellow soap the part you wish to work on.

Air-Beds are best for chronic invalids, as they do not require making daily, and are always cool and soft.

To Keep Tiles Bright. The tiles which are so frequently used in halls and passages may be preserved at their best if they are washed, at least twice a week, with skim milk, instead of soap and water. (*Reply to* JANET.)

Stewed Calves' Heart. The heart of a calf (or lamb), if stuffed with tomato pulp and then gently stewed, is excellent. This is a much more wholesome way of cooking it than stuffing with veal forcemeat and baking.

A Good Toilet Soap for an irritable skin is this: Scrape finely a dry cake of brown Windsor soap. Mix with it an ounce of lemon juice, and the same quantity of Eau de Cologne. When thoroughly blended make into cakes for use.

Kerosene will Remove iron rust and fruit stains from almost every kind of goods without injuring the fabric. Wash the soiled spot in kerosene as you would water. The spots must be washed in kerosene before they have been put into soap and water or it will do no good.

I am unable to Answer many Letters this Week because the replies would not be suitable for the page, and my correspondents have given no address. It would be a great help to me if all my readers who desire questions answered would head their letters with a clearly-written address.

Greasy Pans should be wiped with soft paper as soon as done with, then filled with cold water in which is put a teaspoonful of ammonia and a piece of washing soda the size of a bean. You will find it easier to wash them when the time comes, and they will not be roughened as when scraped with a knife. (*Reply to* A. W.)

Hashed Tripe. Take about a pound of tripe and cut it in strips, place it in a saucepan with a breakfast cup of milk or milk and water. Add to it an ounce of butter, with a dessertspoonful of flour worked into it. Season with pepper and salt and a little minced onion. Let it simmer slowly for three quarters of an hour, and then serve. Garnish with chopped parsley.

To Clean Decanters. When decanters and carafes become discoloured inside, so that shot or sand, or fine coals will not cleanse them, fill the bottle with finely-chopped potato skins, cork tightly and let it stand for three days, during which time the skins will ferment; then empty and rinse with clear water, and the glass will be as clear and sparkling as when new.

Canary Pudding should be boiled about two hours, and will suit you, as it requires no suet. Ingredients: The weight of three eggs in sugar and butter, the weight of two eggs in flour, the rind of a small lemon, and three eggs. Melt the butter, but do not oil it. Add the sugar, and finely minced lemon-peel. Add the dried flour gradually. Keep the batter well stirred, whisk the eggs, and add them to the pudding. Beat for ten minutes, and pour into a buttered basin. When boiling care must be taken that the water is only half way up the basin. (*Reply to* TINY, Stonehouse).

Waste of Bread. It is a sad fact that there is, in most households, more extravagance in bread—the real staff of life—than in any other article. Pieces are thrown away or given to pigs, crumbs shaken into the fire, and crusts or "heels" of loaves allowed to get stale. A careful and thrifty housekeeper has a covered pan in the corner of the larder, in which every scrap and crumb of bread left unconsumed is placed. Once a week regularly these are dried—*not browned* or *burnt*—in the oven, then crushed on the pastebord or pounded in a mortar, sifted through a wire sieve, and stored in a canister. Not only are these breadcrumbs useful for frying soles, cutlets, etc., but soaked in milk they make the foundation of many sweet puddings, which have both the advantage of being economical and nutritious. It is needless for me to add that the style and flavour of these may be varied to any extent.

Pudding Cloths are best when made square and of very thick linen. After use rinse them in clean water, employing no soap.

Shortbread. One pound of flour, half pound of butter, six ounces of castor sugar. Knead well together, roll out, cut into shapes, and place in a shallow tin. Bake slowly. (*Reply to* MAY, Swansea.)

The Grand Secret in Managing Children is to keep one's own temper, and never to raise the voice when correcting them. Of course, this requires great love and patience, and no small amount of self-control, but the object gained is worthy of all.

To Clean Combs. Combs should never be washed, but should, daily after use, be well brushed and wiped with a cloth or very soft paper. If this plan be followed, they will never become unpleasant, and will last an indefinite time—in fact until broken.

Soot in the Carpet is troublesome to remove, but it may be successfully treated thus: When it falls, throw over it an equal quantity of dry salt. Sweep it up with a perfectly clean brush, and the stain will be removed. Should any trace remain, sprinkle again with salt.

Rusty Tools can be beautifully cleaned by my method. Procure a very little sulphuric acid and dilute it with seven times its weight of water. With a rag moisten the saws, chisels, etc., with the acid diluted, and scour with emery. Rinse, and then finish off with oil and emery flour. (*Reply to* MENTONE.)

Cleaning Marble. Marble is a very difficult article to clean if it is stained in such a way that the stain has sunk into the stone. Slight stains may be easily removed with a pumice stone or with vigorous scrubbing. Greasy stains are best removed with a paste of fuller's earth applied in the same way as it is to wall paper.

Tar is most useful as a preventive to insects. If ants or beetles are troublesome in the store-cupboard, place a line of tar round the flour and sugar barrels, and along the bottom of the walls. They will not cross that line. Dip newspaper into tar, and with it plug the holes of mice and rats, and the occupants will immediately forsake their haunts.

Cleaning Mattresses. When mattresses are stained, take starch, wet into a paste with cold water. Spread this on the stains, first putting the mattress in the sun. In an hour or two brush this off, and if not clean repeat the process. Every mattress should be examined during the spring cleaning, and all stains removed at once.

Corns are Caused by Pressure obstructing the circulation, and when first they commence to appear in children's feet it is wise to take immediate steps to cure them by placing a piece of absorbent cotton between the toes. It is most important, too, that children suffering from corns should wear boots and shoes of soft leather with wide toes.

Beds Should Never be Placed Against a Wall. In arranging a bedroom, place the bed as much as possible in the centre of the room, so that the air can circulate freely round it. If the bed is placed against a wall, and the occupant sleeps with his face towards it, his breath is thrown back and breathed again, which is very unhealthy.

Sanitary Size. Messrs. Gannon and Co., of Lincoln, write me on the subject of my recent paragraph, headed "Whitewashing." They claim that in their Patent Concentrated Sanitary Size is an article which has been specially prepared with a view to obviating the very objections that I raised; and, further, that their Sanitary Size is a deodoriser and disinfectant which may be used with the utmost confidence.

Rook Pie. Pick and clean four rooks, remove the heads and feet, and cut out the backbone of each. Lay a quarter of a pound of rumpsteak cut in neat rolls at the bottom of a pie-dish, lay the birds on the meat, breasts upwards, well seasoned with pepper and salt mixed in flour. Place two ounces of butter in knobs over them and three hard-boiled eggs. Cover with puff paste and bake as a pigeon pie. This will take a hour and a quarter to cook. (*Reply to* FARMER'S WIFE.)

Soap Balls for Scouring can be made thus: Cut up some good yellow soap and put it into a jar standing in a saucepan of boiling water. When the soap is melted, stir in well washed silver sand until it is pretty stiff. Take off the fire and add a small teaspoonful of powdered rock ammonia to every half pound of soap used. As the soap becomes cool and stiff make it into balls the size of an orange. When cold they should be stored away. This soap may be used as any other crystal soap. The sand should be of a fine quality, or it will scratch the surface. (*Reply to* ANNA.)

Eggs for Winter Use should be preserved during this month and next, when they are most plentiful.

Orange Peel, if dried and powdered, makes a delicious flavouring for cakes and puddings. The peel of Tangerine oranges is very much appreciated by some people as a flavouring.

Polish Ivory by scouring it with finest sand-paper, then moisten some whiting with oil and apply with a piece of smooth flannel, rubbing it well, and finish off with a lightly-piled linen rag.

A Sewing Machine Needle may be easily threaded by those with imperfect sight if they place behind it a piece of white paper. This immediately shows up the eye and removes any difficulty.

Fried Bananas. Cook them thus, you will find them delicious:—Cut the fruit in three lengthways, dip each piece in flour, and fry in hot butter. Drain on paper and serve very hot. Hand sugar and lemon with them. (*Reply to* FIFI.)

Treat Tender Feet in this way and you will, I feel sure, speedily obtain relief. Wash the feet daily, but do not put them into water to steep. Dry thoroughly, and then rub the soles with a little methylated spirit. Paint the enlarged toe joint with iodine for a few nights, and let it dry in well. (*Reply to* J. W.)

A Simple Tapioca Pudding is made thus:—Soak two tablespoonsful of tapioca in a pint of milk for an hour, then put it on to boil, stirring it to prevent it sticking. Mix in (off the fire) one egg and one tablespoonful of sugar. Bake in a greased pie-dish till nicely browned. (*Reply to* ANGELA.)

Now Veal is in Season again, I am constantly being asked for recipes of veal pic-nic dishes. This is one that I have found very popular, and the ingredients are simple:—A few slices of cold roast veal, ditto of ham, two hard-boiled eggs, two tablespoonsful of minced parsley, pepper, good gravy, and a little tarragon vinegar. Cut off all the brown from the veal, cut the eggs into slices; lay veal, ham, eggs, and parsley in layers, with a little pepper and mace between each in a mould. Get some strong stock and fill up the shape. Bake for three-quarters of an hour in a moderate oven. Stand till cold, when you will be able to turn out a veal cake.

Advice in Trifles. A little borax added to the water in which scarlet napkins and red-bordered towels are washed, will prevent them from fading.——Butter or lard should be kept in earthenware or stoneware jars, not in tins, in a cool place.——Make machine oil with one part good paraffin and three parts of fine olive oil.——To blacken a brick hearth, mix some black lead with soft soap and a little water, and boil it. Then lay it on with a brush.——To preserve bacon, cut away the parts affected, and cover the rest with dry sifted wood ashes and keep in a dry place.——Many cooks are not aware that meat may be kept good in the height of summer for several days by lightly covering it with bran, and hanging it where there is a good current of air.——Children's spring and summer clothing should be as light as possible with flannel or wool next to the skin; either materials so worn will ward off dangerous chills and prevent colds.

Isobel

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S		6	13	20	27	S		4	11	18	25	S	1	8	15	22	29	S		5	12	19	26
M		7	14	21	28	M		5	12	19	26	M	2	9	16	23	30	M		6	13	20	27
T	1	8	15	22	29	T		6	13	20	27	T	3	10	17	24	31	T		7	14	21	28
W	2	9	16	23	30	W		7	14	21	28	W	4	11	18	25		W	1	8	15	22	
T	3	10	17	24		T	1	8	15	22	29	T	5	12	19	26		T	2	9	16	23	
F	4	11	18	25		F	2	9	16	23	30	F	6	13	20	27		F	3	10	17	24	
S	5	12	19	26		S	3	10	17	24	31	S	7	14	21	28		S	4	11	18	25	

MARCH.						APRIL.						MAY.						JUNE.					
S		5	12	19	26	S		2	9	16	23	30	S		7	14	21	28	S		4	11	18	25
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F	3	10	17	24	31	F	7	14	21	28			F	5	12	19	26		F	2	9	16	23	30
S	4	11	18	25		S	1	8	15	22	29		S	6	13	20	27		S	3	10	17	24	

JULY.						AUGUST.						SEPTEMBER.						OCTOBER.					
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T	1	6	13	20	27		T	3	10	17	24	31	T	4	7	14	21	28	T	5	12	19	26	
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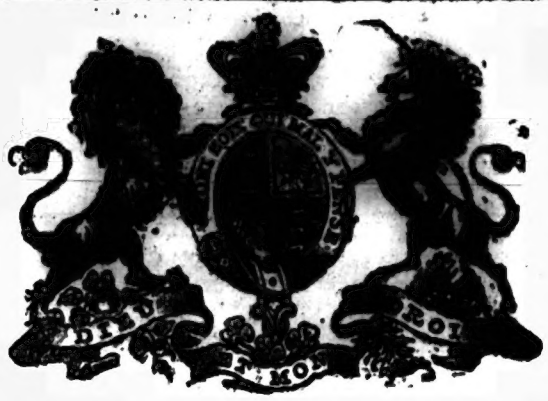
S	3	8	15	22	29		S	5	12	19	26		S	6	9	16	23	30	S	7	14	21	28	

APPOINTED BY SPECIAL ROYAL WARRANT



SOAP MAKERS TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

A DAUGHTER'S HAPPINESS.

There is no incident in a mother's life more deeply moving than when she is alone for the last time with her daughter, shortly to become a wife, the training of whom for a useful, happy life has been her constant care. There stands the young bride, full of hope and confidence in the future, scarcely giving a thought to the happy home she is leaving, and scarcely asking herself whether she will be equally happy in the home she is seeking for herself. In a few minutes the carriage will bear her away, and she will have passed from her mother's care to that of the man to whom she is confiding her whole future happiness. In these few minutes of waiting the mother lives again the years that have flown past since her daughter was a wee toddling babe, and asks herself if she could possibly have done more than she has done to secure her daughter's happiness. At such a time the mother finds the deepest satisfaction in knowing that whilst her daughter is fully accomplished for the ballroom and for all the social duties of life, she is equally accomplished and equally well trained in all the details of household management. These things are not trifles, as some would suppose. The happiness of a household depends on cleanliness and comfort: with these the cottage is a HOME, without them the palace is a wilderness. Happy is the wife who has been taught that the easiest, surest, safest, and most economical way to secure cleanliness and comfort in her household is by the regular use of

SUNLIGHT SOAP.

WHAT CAN WE TELL YOU?

MAKE an English word with the following letters:—

A D E G H I L N N O R S W.

A pencil-case to the first person from whom a correct solution is received, and to every twenty-fifth until FIFTY have been given away. Post-cards only, please. Letters will be disqualified.

W. L. R. writes:

"I have seen several family curiosities noted recently in your columns, and so I beg to add another. I know a family in Lancashire every member of which is fingerless. So far as can be ascertained, this peculiarity has existed in the family for many generations, and the three generations alive at the present time all exhibit it. Their hands look as though the fingers had been roughly amputated below the second joint, leaving a short stump. There are no nails, and an ordinary observer would imagine that some accident had resulted in cutting the fingers off. The thumbs in every case are intact, and are unusually large and strong. In every other respect the members of this family are fully endowed by Nature.

L. J. wants to know whether he should eat butter with bread and cheese.——There are excellent reasons both for and against this practice. Against, it may be said that good cheese does not require butter, and bad cheese does not deserve it. While for, it may be said that the practice is economical inasmuch as it makes the same piece of bread do for both.

S. W. wishes to know whether, when a man liberated on bail commits suicide, his bail is forfeited?——Legally it is, but practically it is not, as the Court invariably takes the humane and common-sense view that the self-slayer has, by his own act, inflicted a far heavier punishment upon himself than any human justice could have done in the event of his being found guilty. S. W. also asks whether a life insurance policy is rendered void by suicide?——Yes, all or nearly all insurance companies make an exception as to this mode of death, but many insurances have been paid by the more liberal companies in respect of deaths by suicide in cases where they have been satisfied that the suicide was due, not to deliberate intention to defraud, but rather in consequence of mental disease resulting in an irresponsible act which carried no moral guilt with it.

THREADNEEDLE STREET.—I believe the fastest long-distance train in the world is the Empire State Express, which runs between New York and Buffalo, covering the whole distance in eight hours and forty minutes: that is to say, 440 miles in 520 minutes.

E. C. asks what is the greatest number of wives a man has legally had?——E.C. omits to mention whether he means successively or all at once. In this country our notions are somewhat narrow on the subject, and a comparatively moderately married man like Henry VIII. would probably carry off the palm. On the other hand, there is nothing legally wrong with the somewhat complicated matrimonial arrangements of the Sultan of Turkey, who has at present about three thousand wives in residence and reversion. Abdul Hamid is probably the champion married man of the present day, though the Shah of Persia and King Behanzin of Dahomey run him pretty close.

T. T.—You have quite mistaken ideas about the Princess of Wales's extravagance in dress. As a matter of fact, she is simple almost to severity in all articles of clothing, and considers herself unnecessarily extravagant if she pays more than 30s. for a new bonnet fully trimmed. And so does the Prince, her husband.

W. W. has written to take exception to Reply No. 1321, which states that the highest rank ever obtained by a private in the British army was reached by Colonel Luke O'Connor, who had the honorary rank of Major General.——In support of his contention my correspondent gives with full dates and references a very remarkable career which none of those who answered the question seem to have heard of, and of which I must confess myself ignorant. This is the career of Joseph Brome, who about 1726, when twelve years old, enlisted as a drummer-boy in the Royal Regiment of Artillery then stationed in the Island of Minorca. He passed through all the ranks of non-commissioned and commissioned officer, saving only that of "Gentleman Cadet," and died in April, 1796, full Lieutenant-General. He had a son who rose to the same rank, and a grandson who was a General in the Coldstream Guards. My correspondent also tells a good story of Lieutenant-General Brome, who was a small man and a strict martinet. He once heard a drummer-boy beat the ruffles so badly, that he ran up to him whisked the drum and belt off his shoulders, hung it round his own neck, snatching the drum-sticks away at the same time. Then he beat a brilliant tattoo, winding up with an elaborate flourish, and gave the drum back, saying, "There, you young man, that's the way I used to beat when I was a drummer-boy."

THE Fresh-Air Fund subscription list is "dull and lower" this week, as our City friends would express it. We have probably got the sudden return of the cold weather to thank for the inanimate state of affairs. The idea of sending little children into the country somehow does not fit in well with overcoats, east winds, fires, and an overcast sky. However, by the time this is published old Sol will probably be beaming upon us again, and cheering our hearts with promises, and, better still, signs of the approach of summer and the good time that is in store for our little slum friends.

It is pleasant to see how busy some of our readers have been with their collecting cards. This is a splendid way of gathering in the pennies, as so many who would gladly give that sum cannot afford the further outlay on a postage-stamp to bring their subscriptions into our hands.

For the sake of my new readers it should be said that:

The sum of [illegible] will provide each child with a substantial meat pie, and [illegible] pay for a sufficiency of bread, [illegible] and milk [illegible] half a pint of milk will cost [illegible], half a pound of bread the same, [illegible] and a quarter of a pound of cake [illegible]. Each child's railway fare costs [illegible].

Subscriptions should be addressed to the editor of *P.W.* at Temple Chambers, London, E.C. Large collecting forms and small cards containing places for sixty penny subscriptions can be obtained, on application, by those who are sufficiently interested in THE FRESH-AIR FUND to care to assist it in this way.

Ninepence gives a day's happiness to a child; £5 [illegible] pays for a complete party of 200. There are no expenses of management; every penny goes to the children in the form of food or fares.

Amount previously acknowledged:—

£334 17s. 9½d.

W. Young, 2s. 6d.; Compton, 2s. 6d.; J. W. M., 1s.; Irene, 8s. 3d.; Anon., 3s.; H. D. J., 5s.; J. P. Warner, 1s. 6d.; G. Day, 5s.; J. Henderson, 5s.; A Friend, 10d.; L. E. J., £2; A. Hemingway, 5s.; H. and A. E. Davis, 2s.; F. L., J. E. K., and W. Brown, 5s.; Anon., 1s.; K. Maynard, 1s.; Mrs. Allen, 10s.; H. P. L., 1s. 6d.; A. E. Harris, from men on H.M.S. *Hecla*, £1; With Love, 1s.; E. Walsh, 1s. 6d.; For Her Sake, 9d.; May Blossom, 1s.; E. Walker, 1s. 6d.; Kate L., 3s.

The following amounts have been collected by the persons named:—

W. M. B., £2 1s.; Tommie Tanner, 8s.; Nollie Tanner, 18s.; Cicely Hooker, 10s.; P. K., 2s. 7d.; Grace Wade, £1; F. G. Smart, from Staff at Millbay Station, 7s. 9d.; F. J. L., 2s. 10d.

Grand Total £346 11s. 9½d.

(Of which £200 subscribed by *P.W.* and the R.S.U. go to cover the establishment expenses.)

THERE is a very considerable monotony about the daily round of vegetables which is dished up for us year in year out. The eternal potato and the sickly green, with a few varieties in the way of the carrot, artichoke, or asparagus seem to have an entire and perpetual monopoly in the market, and either human energy or human ingenuity, possibly both, have failed in the attempt to introduce some new variety to tickle the jaded appetite. A young lady reader, subscribing herself CANTONI, has written a grumble on this very matter, and her letter finished by bringing a gleam of hope into one's heart. She hears that a new vegetable is to be introduced very shortly from Japan. Its European name is "Crosnes," and whether baked, boiled, or roasted it has a delicious flavour. The cultivation of this new vegetable requires neither great outlay or special care, and I hope my fair correspondent is right in saying that it will soon become a familiar friend on our menus.

H. P. J. wishes to know whether pearl oysters have any shell when they first come into existence?——Pearl oysters are just like others in this respect. In the early stages of their existence they have no shells worth speaking of. Merely a thin film of calcareous deposit over the soft tissues of their bodies. This, bar accidents, subsequently hardens and thickens into the oyster shell, but millions of oysters fall victims to the various sea-creatures which prey on them before the shell becomes hard enough to afford protection.

MOZART II.—No, I don't think that setting verses to music would be a very good sort of competition. So few readers would be able to compete with any chance of success.

A. B. C., who from his own description is a working man with valuable ideas, but no money, writes to say that in his opinion, and as far as he can understand the general construction of the air-ship mentioned in THE ANGEL OF THE REVOLUTION, it would not work because the author has left out the essential part, as many other would-be inventors have done before him. He goes on to say that he is able to supply the deficiency, and that if the money is found he will produce a working model of a navigable aerial machine, which shall work.——It is just possible that the writer of the story could do the same, but that is no reason why he should make public ideas which might be worth a fortune a-piece, to say nothing of revolutionising the world. If A. B. C. can do what he says, he should be able to satisfy plenty of people with money, who, if satisfied, would gladly spend it in helping him. As a first step he might send his plans along to this office. I will keep the secret sacred, and if I am satisfied that his model will work, I will enable him to construct it. If this is not a fair offer, perhaps he will tell me what he thinks would be.

F. L.—I hardly like to answer your question about the distance of the fixed stars, as so many of a similar nature have been ignored owing to the number of statements on this point that have appeared in the paper from time to time. But I came across so good an illustration the other day that it seems worth giving for your benefit, and that of other readers who are interested in the subject. The speed of the electric current is, roughly speaking, 180,000 miles a second. A message sent at this speed would go round the earth seven times in a second; it would reach the moon in a second, and the sun in eight minutes. To reach the nearest fixed star it would take three years, and there are stars which astronomers have succeeded in proving to be so remote that if in 1066 the news of the conquest of England by Norman William had been wired to them, the message would still be on its way. Yet these are by no means the most remote. There are others so far off that if the news of the first Christmas in Bethlehem 1,892 years ago, had been sent them by telegram, they would not have received it yet.

ORIENTAL sends an account of the story of the Deluge, which will, I expect, be new to our readers. It is part of the creed of an East Indian tribe he lately visited. Thus it runs:—

When the great Spirit was displeased with man he determined to consume the whole world with fire. In a golden palace on the top of the highest mountain he shut up a male and female of every animal. A man and a woman were preserved in a crystal palace which floated in the air. Then the whole earth was set on fire. At last the flames subsided, and behold the great Spirit looked and saw that everything was smirched and smoky. So giants were sent down to give the place a scrubbing. But in doing this they had to use so much water that they flooded the whole world, and only the golden and the crystal palaces escaped destruction.

A. B.—No hard and fast line can be drawn. We always pronounce Lyons over here as Lions, and Paris as it is spelled, although the French themselves call it Paree. Anybody, on the other hand, who talked about going over from Dover to Calais (pronounced as it is spelled) would be looked upon as an ignoramus.

J. U. is puzzled by the fact that a fly can fly about the inside of a railway carriage travelling fifty or sixty miles an hour and not get dashed to death against the back of the carriage.——I fancy I have answered this question before, but as it is one which is frequently cropping up, it is perhaps worth answering again. The reason is that the fly and the body of air in which it is flying about are both endowed with the motion of the train, which has no effect on the motion of the fly, and is not perceived by it. Open the windows so that the body of air moving with the carriage is brought into contact with the comparatively motionless air outside, and the fly will soon find his position altered by the current that sets in. The fly in the closed carriage is in exactly the same position as man is with reference to the earth. We are travelling through space at the rate of 68,000 miles an hour, and whirling round at a speed of about 1,000 miles an hour, yet we feel no motion of the air on this account, because both the air and ourselves are moving at exactly the same speed as the earth.

I. M.—Fashion, and fashion alone, has determined that the third finger of the left hand should receive the wedding ring, and there is no real reason why your prospective bride should not be unconventional in this matter if it so please her. I find in an old book on etiquette, which was published in the year 1732, that it is the bride's privilege to choose upon which finger her wedding ring shall be placed, and it also goes on to mention that many ladies of that day preferred the thumb as being the strongest member of the hand.

ACCELLOR.—I suppose you mean the "wind-flower," which is a native of South America, and so far as I know cannot be found elsewhere. The blossom is only visible when the wind blows. The plant belongs to the cactus family and stands some three feet in height. When the atmosphere is disturbed a quantity of lovely flowers open from the little "knots" on the stalk.

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		s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£200.	19	2 6½	1 10 6	3 14 10	2 4 4
	30	3 0	1 16 0	5 1 8	3 5 8
	40	3 8	2 4 0	6 13 2	4 9 2
	49	5 7½	3 7 6	8 18 10	5 11 4
£400.	19	5 1	3 1 0	7 9 8	4 8 8
	30	6 0	3 12 0	10 3 4	6 11 4
	40	7 4	4 8 0	13 6 4	8 18 4
	49	11 3	6 15 0	17 17 8	11 2 8
£600.	19	7 7½	4 11 6	11 4 6	6 13 0
	30	9 0	5 8 0	15 5 0	9 17 0
	40	11 0	6 12 0	19 19 6	13 7 6
	49	16 10½	10 2 6	26 16 6	16 14 0

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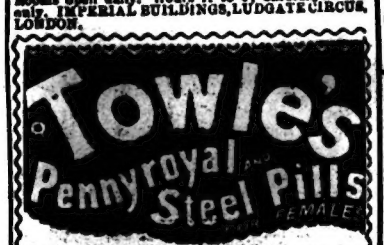

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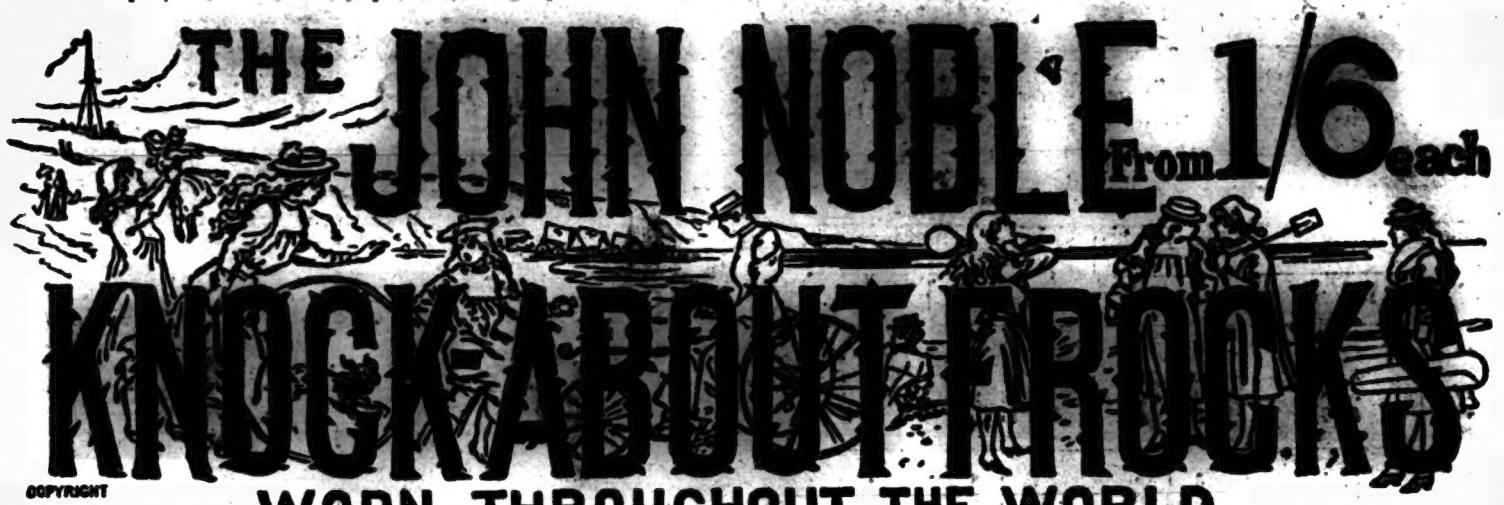

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PLEASE CONSIDER THESE PRICES:

LENGTHS	21	24	27	30	33	36	39	42	45	Inches.
Price	1/6	2/-	2/6	3/-	3/6	4/-	4/6	5/-	5/6	each.

Postage 4½d. extra. Every Purchaser Delighted.

The lengths stated are from top of neck band to bottom of skirt in front. If you have a young girl just try a Knockabout Frock; nothing could be better for regular or school wear, and cash will be returned at once if Frock fails to please. *These Knockabout Frocks are also supplied at the same prices in the Victoria COTTON Matelasse CLOTH, a new and extremely durable washing fabric, in a pretty and effective basket-work weaving, the colours being Pink, Sky, Navy, Drab, or Grey.*

THE FOLLOWING ARE A FEW CRITICAL OPINIONS OF THE PRESS:—

"Special attention must be drawn to a new material. This is the Cheviot Serge, very strong, exceedingly moderate in price, and of double width. NEVER HAS BETTER VALUE BEEN OFFERED TO THE PUBLIC."—*Season.*

"For school dresses for young ladies and children it would scarcely be possible to find a more suitable material; and in appearance the new Cheviot Serge compares favourably with Serges of double the price."—*Young Ladies' Journal.*

"But what follows is even more astounding—a Lady's Entire Costume from this Serge, trimmed with braid, John Noble can furnish for 10s. 6d."—*Queen.*

"MR. NOBLE supplies Ladies' Costume complete made from this Serge, and the prices are simply amazing. Imagine buying one for 10s. 6d.! I wondered how they were made for the money, and I am still wondering, the price being less than the materials alone would cost in the usual way. How does he do it? I am sure I cannot tell, but he does it, and remarkably well, too. And how he can afford to do it I really cannot imagine, for his Serge is of such capital quality. Again, I say wonderful—most wonderful, truly, are the ways of MR. JOHN NOBLE of Manchester!"—*Gentlewoman.*

"His ready-made Children's Frocks and Coats are well worth seeing, for they are excellently finished."—*Pearson's Weekly.*

"They are most extraordinary value for the money."—*Myra's Journal.*

EVERY READER of "Pearson's Weekly" is asked to consider just for one moment the following particulars:—

Model 5.

THIS ILLUSTRATION represents a Lady's neat and useful Costume, thoroughly well made and finished in the JOHN NOBLE CHEVIOT SERGE, thick, warm, and durable. The bodice is a blouse shape, with bound seams and belt attached; it is pleated back and front, and the saddle and sleeves are well lined. The Skirt, a smart, stylish shape, 40 in. long, has a deep inside facing of the same material at the bottom, the advantages of this for wear being obvious; while the lower part of the skirt and the cuffs, saddle, and collar of bodice are trimmed with rows of narrow Black Russia Braid, the whole thus forming

A LADY'S COMPLETE COSTUME 10/6

In the JOHN NOBLE CHEVIOT SERGE for

Carriage paid for 7½d. extra. The sizes kept in stock will fit any figure up to 38 in. round the bust (under arms), but larger or special sizes can be made to order at a cost of 1s. 6d. extra. Colours: Navy, Brown, Grenat, Ruby, Myrtle, Réséda, Black, &c. *The Lady's Half-Guinea Costume is also supplied in the Victoria COTTON Matelasse CLOTH, in Pink, Sky, Navy, Drab, or Grey.* **Bear in mind that these are not slop-made or "skimpy"-looking Garments,** produced in low sweating dens, but are made in John Noble's clean, airy, and well-appointed workrooms, by workers specially reserved for the Cheviot Serge garments.

HUNDREDS OF MOST FLATTERING TESTIMONIALS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FROM DELIGHTED PURCHASERS, AMONGST THEM THE FOLLOWING:—

MISS J. D. A——, Schoolhouse, Sandspring, Lerwick, Shetland, writes:—"My 10s. 6d. serge pleases very well, and fits like a glove. The last serge dress I got from you two years ago is wearing like leather yet. It has been soaked with salt water three different times, and instead of spoiling it seems to have made it wear longer."

MRS. C. W. B——, Wood Villas, Fetterhall Wood, Wolverhampton, writes: "Seeing your advertisement in FAMILY CIRCLE I am astonished at prices of children's frocks, and as I have a family of five little girls I think that it would save me much time and trouble if I could get frocks for them at the prices you mention, as I have to pay nearly as much for making. I would like to see the quality of material, &c., so enclose postage stamps value 2s. 4½d., for one Black Cheviot Serge frock, size 24 inches."

MRS. W. H——, Camp Fire Brigade, Aldershot, writes:—"I this morning received the 'Girl's Cheviot Serge Frock' and am very pleased with it. Can't understand how they are made for the price."

"South Coast, Torquay, MISS G—— has seen the 10s. 6d. Cheviot Serge Lady's Complete Costume sent by MR. NOBLE to a friend of hers, and she was so pleased with it that she will thank Mr. Noble to send to above address one like it. It was blue serge. MISS G—— will show it to her friends. It is a really good, well-made article."

MRS. E. M——, Barrow, writes:—"Dear Sir,—I thought you would be interested to learn that the Navy Blue 'Cheviot Serge Costume' I bought for my little girl has been washed with soap and hot water, and it really looks better than when new."

K. B., Vicarage, Huddersfield. "MRS. C—— is well satisfied with the 'Serge Costume' for 10s. 6d., and thinks it is a MARVEL OF CHEAPNESS AND EXCELLENCE."

MR. S. G——, Ostel Street, near Swinton, writes:—"The 'Knockabout Frock' my little daughter perfectly. If I had known of your Serge Dresses I should have had mine made at your establishment, as the making here costs as much as the dress costs altogether."

MRS. J. B——, Slough Green, near Whites, Lancashire, writes:—"The Knockabout Frock was safely received last week, and I certainly must say the value is very remarkable, I enclose order for 1s. 9d., and shall be glad if you will forward another 21 inches long, navy, early as possible."

The John Noble Cheviot Serge (Registered) is the Most Successful Serge yet Produced

At a low price for Ladies' and Children's wear. Many Serges are sold at a similar price, but in almost every instance there is a peculiar appearance of the surface that stamps them at once as being of common or cheap character, thus rendering them suitable only for low-class trades and charitable purposes. The combination, however, of certain yarns used in the manufacture of the John Noble Cheviot Serge (the outcome of long and careful experiments) has now resulted in the perfected production of a fabric that has **never been equalled at the price,** in fact, a Serge that, so far as wear and general appearance go, might reasonably be said to be **worth anywhere between 2s. 6d. and 3s. 6d. the yard.** The colours are perfectly fast, rain will not spoil them, they are beautifully finished, every yard is carefully examined before being allowed to leave the works, and last, but not least, it has been most conclusively proved that the John Noble Cheviot Serge may be washed if necessary. This serge is extra width, 52 inches (consequently cuts to the best advantage in making garments), and John Noble offers to every reader of *Pearson's Weekly.*

Send a Postcard for illustrations of John Noble's New and Novel Designs in Costumes for Girls. They are exceedingly pretty and decidedly cheap.

A FULL DRESS LENGTH OF SIX YARDS FOR 7/6

Or any length supplied at 1s. 3d. the yard. Postage on One Dress Length 9d. extra, or Three Dress Lengths carriage paid for [illegible] 6d. The colours mostly in demand are Navy, Brown, Grenat, Ruby, Myrtle, Réséda, &c., but particularly a good dark Navy, Mid-Brown, and Black.

REMEMBER, THIS SERGE is a thick, warm, and durable tailor serge, that **WEARS WELL, LOOKS WELL, and COSTS SO LITTLE** that every lady should give it a trial, especially as the risk is so small, for John Noble guarantees to refund cash to any purchaser who is not perfectly satisfied on receipt of goods, and he could not afford to do this unless he had the greatest confidence that every purchaser would be simply delighted with the extraordinary value.

PATTERNS and ILLUSTRATIONS of Cheviot Serge and other GARMENTS for Ladies' and Children's wear sent POST FREE with pleasure to any Address.

Noble's Novelties in Fashionable Dress Fabrics are NOW READY and Large Box, containing over 1,000 Patterns, will be sent, Post Free, on application, to any Address.

CAUTION. JOHN NOBLE regrets it is necessary to caution his clients against misleading imitators, and therefore warns all readers that the JOHN NOBLE Cheviot Serge and Garments cannot be supplied by any shop, but are only to be procured direct from the Sole Manufacturer—

JOHN NOBLE, THE WAREHOUSE, 78, PRINCESS ST., MANCHESTER.